

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL

The Anglo-Soviet Journal is the quarterly organ of the Society for Cultural Relations between the Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the USSR.

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THE DEVELOPMENTS OF SOVIET SCIENCE

By J. D. Bernal, F.R.S.

*(Abridged transcript of a lecture given for the SCR
Science Section at the Beaver Hall, London, on June
21, 1951, with D. T. Richnell in the chair.)*

WHAT I am proposing to talk about is the application of science to the major construction tasks in the Soviet Union. On my last visit there (in March 1951) I realised that the best thing I could do was to find out all I could from the people who really were in charge about how science was being applied in the construction schemes; and I was given quite extraordinary facilities. I took up the time of three of the major executives to the extent of about four hours each, and I had in front of me not only many members of their staff, but also all kinds of detailed plans and maps and a good deal of unpublished material. Naturally, I could not bring that material back here, but what I am telling you is based on that kind of information, and I think I shall provide enough visual evidence to show the real validity of the things I talk about.

In the first place, I should like to give a little continuation of what I had been able to see on my previous visit in a field of architecture in which I have some first-hand experience and knowledge. I was very interested to see how very much the methods of architecture had changed in the eighteen months between my two visits. I will begin by showing you a slide of a piece of somewhat antiquated architectural practice in the Soviet Union, a bricklaying team (Fig. 1). The team consists of three women and two men, and they are doing something that all the officials in the bricklaying business in this country have said is quite impossible, that is bricklaying which results in 2,000 to 2,500 bricks



Fig. 1

being laid per day per man. But bricklaying is becoming obsolete in the Soviet Union, and many new methods are replacing it.

Fig. 2 shows one of a series of pictures that I have of examples of the big buildings. This shows the way in which the outer cladding of the building is placed in position. Many people queried

THE GREAT CONSTRUCTION SITES

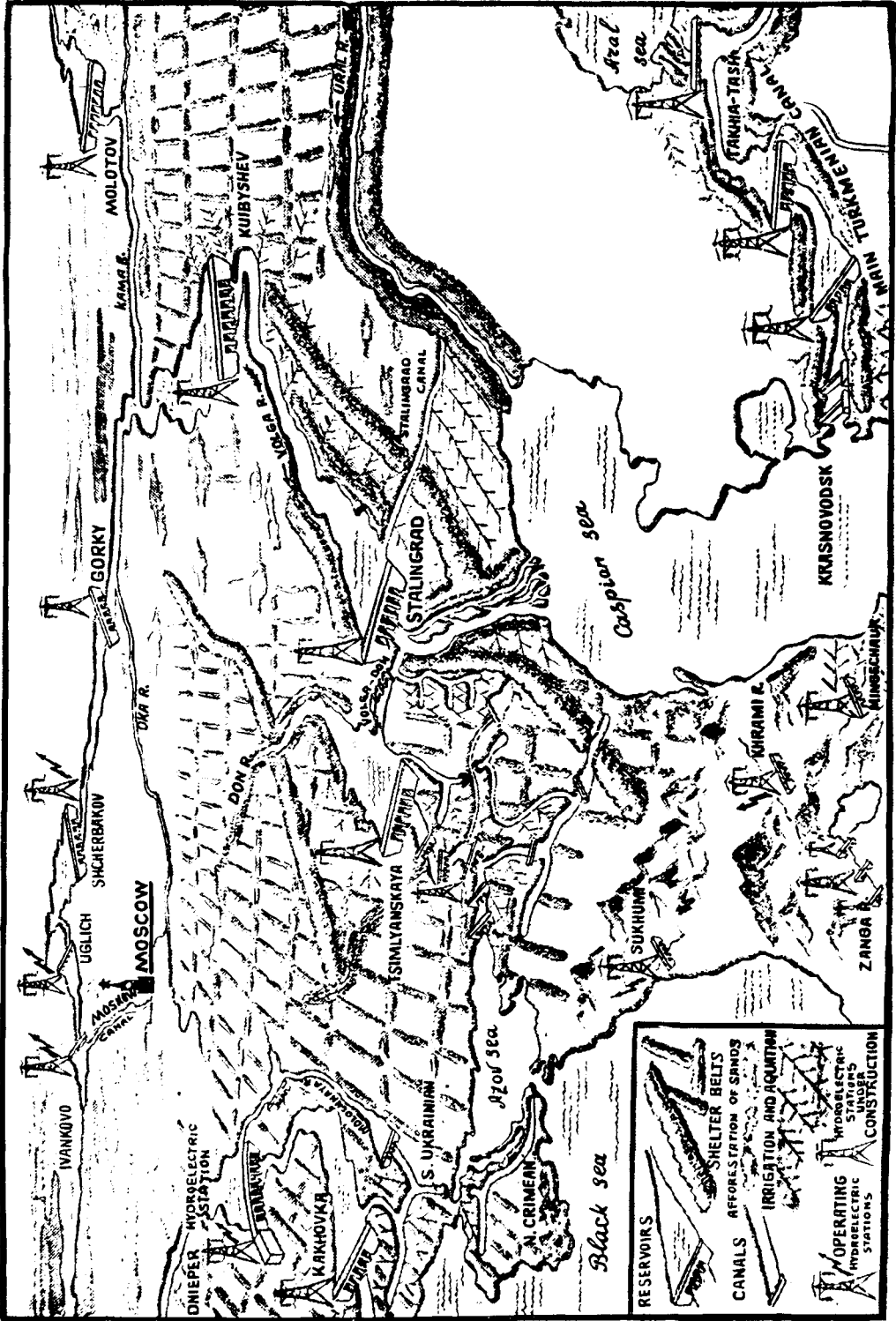




Fig. 2

the statement I made a year ago that the Soviet building went on without interruption or slowing down throughout the winter. The inside work would obviously go on ; but there is strictly speaking no outside work, because in the case of the big buildings all the outside work is done under two-storeyed covered gantries (*Fig. 3*) : these are heated inside : they cover the whole walls of the building at the height of construction and are pulled up as the building rises. In March I saw the completion of one twenty-six storey building, and the near



Fig. 3

eighteen inches thick. The outside blocks have a stone facing, the centre is aerated concrete, and the inside plaster. Horizontal panels are put down, then vertical ones in the spaces between; then the prefabricated windows are dropped in to fill the spaces; then another setting of horizontal panels is placed across that. It is a fantastically simple method of building, and it is all finished in one operation. The units are screwed together and there you have your house. I saw this being done in Leningrad. Another method is shown in *Fig. 4*, in which the unit panel includes the window; it is being lifted by a mobile crane and about to be placed in position—the windows come between the panels. These methods are for houses of up to seven or eight storeys.

For buildings up to fourteen storeys, another method is used, shown in *Fig. 5*. It might be called the portal frame method, one unit being in a pre-cast (some are pre-stressed) reinforced frame, and another a floor unit with light insulated slabs for the outer covering. These are dropped in, and any number of storeys built up. The whole of this depends on a high degree of mechanisation and a great many cranes. The idea of the man-handling of material is very rapidly disappearing; practically all material is crane-handled in large units.

I next want to talk about a peculiar building—if you can call it a building—which I saw in Leningrad. It is a gigantic stadium on an island in the sea, and has near it a yacht harbour and a swimming pool. It is a football stadium, designed to hold about 80,000 people. The architect told me that when he was given the job he said to himself: "Why do all stadiums look like gasworks? I want to build one quickly and cheaply and I don't want it to look like a gasworks. I thought the best way to do it was to make it of sand." What they did was to put a dredger into the sea, run a pipe from it and pump sand from the sea-bottom on to the island; they laid it out in a circle, the sand fell down inside and outside, according to its angle of rest, and there was the stadium (*Fig. 6*). It was covered with a concrete shell and seats were installed. Trees were planted on the outside, and two tunnels were left for the players' entrances. The

completion of two others, in Moscow; all the work on them had been done during the winter months.

The outer cladding is most often hard cement slabs, but cut and polished granites and travertines are used in all ornamental sections. Ceramics are also much used both outside and in. I visited a ceramics research institute. There I found an interesting combination of scientific, archaeological and aesthetic research. The magnificent ceramics of central Asia were being intensely studied to learn how to make the fullest use of their properties and behaviour. In this way they are year by year improving the weather-resistant and aesthetic properties of the ceramic coverings.

The general method of the new prefabricated types of construction is to rely on a large panel which is put in place by means of a crane; a house is built very much like a child's house of bricks; all the bricks are about eight feet by four feet and about



Fig. 4

spectators climb the stairs on the outside and reach their seats through a very high covered gallery (Fig. 7). These labour-saving methods of construction are typical of modern Soviet building: the sand - dredging from the harbour was also intended to improve the navigation of the harbour, so it paid in more ways than one.

The most impressive of all was the university building in Moscow. I asked to go all over it, and not to be limited to an official tour. I was shown all the outside, and also the full-scale try-outs of the rooms. Every student has a private room, and every two students share a bathroom and a

telephone. Every student has a built-in radio. Out of 10,000 students, 6,000 are residents: the others have their homes in Moscow and get to the university by bus or by a new extension of the underground. There are 750 private rooms and private baths for the post-graduate students, and 150 three- to five-room suites for the lecturers.

A feature that may interest chemists is that the whole of the chemical wing has a special exhaust ventilation which passes into a large underground pit outside, so that no fumes can get into any part of the building, or pollute the outside air.

I was taken up to the nineteenth floor of the main tower to see the roof being laid; this is after two and a half years: the whole building is to be finished and occupied in January next, which is three years. There were 17,000 men on the job, working three-hour shifts: the architect said he could have done with 20,000. I noticed that a good many of the people were Soviet Army men, and asked what they were doing there: the architect replied that there wasn't a war on and they might as well be building a university as walking up and down the parade ground.

NOW for what is really the main subject of my talk, the application of science to the big schemes of transforming the whole South-East of the Soviet Union. I have based what I have to say mainly on three major interviews (and a certain number of smaller ones)—with the director of all the hydro-electric dams and

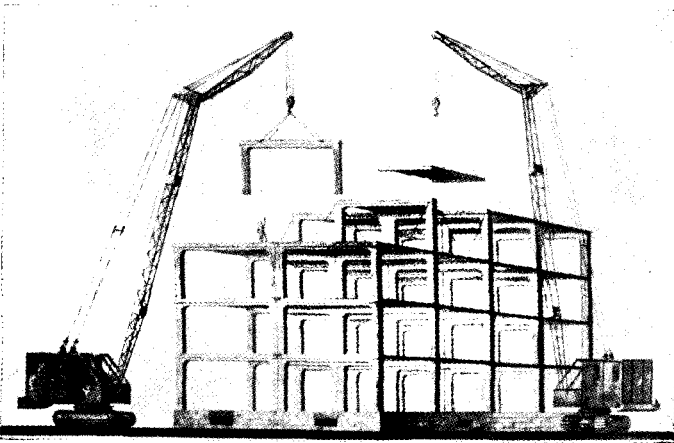


Fig. 5

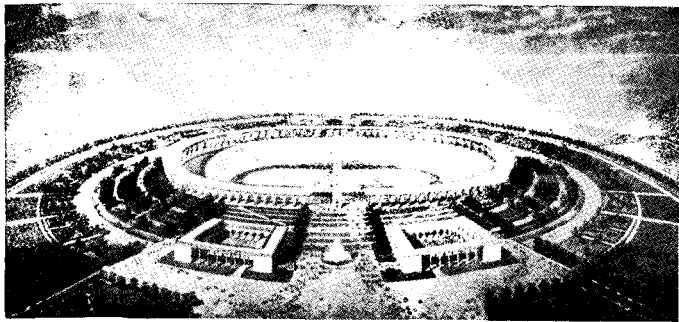


Fig. 6

canal systems, Fimerin, with the director of the new afforestation plans, Chekmenyov, and with the director of all the scientific work for all the schemes, Professor Kovda (one of the members of the Academy, who was specially seconded to this job).

This irrigation and afforestation is an overall plan covering the whole of the dry areas of the Soviet Union, ranging from absolute desert to very dry sandy steppe, and steppe liable to drought. The total area involved is something like two million square miles, twice

the size of Western Europe, or two-thirds the area of the United States. The whole of this area being transformed by three simultaneous and complementary operations—an afforestation scheme, a hydro-electric and navigational canal scheme and an irrigation and soil-conservation scheme. Though separately administered, these form part of one coherent plan. The afforestation is closely linked with the soil-conservation, and also plays a part in regard to

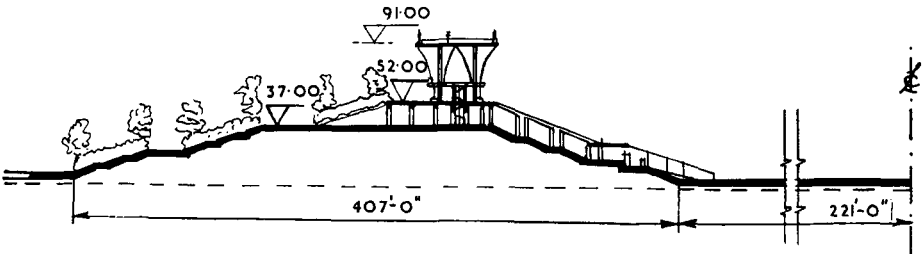


Fig. 7

water supply for the power stations, and so on. The organization is *ad hoc* in the sense that it is divorced from the operation of the All-Union or even of the Republic Ministries in particular matters; for instance, the hydro-electric construction and development plants involved are not under the Minister for Electricity, but under a separate minister for these schemes. The afforestation now going on is not under the Ministry for Forests, but is given a special ministry. Irrigation is also under *ad hoc* supra-republic ministries, that is they include elements from the different republics concerned. There are four republics (the Russian, the Ukrainian, the Uzbek and the Turkmen) in the area involved in the scheme, whose ruling bodies carry representatives of the republics.

The plan falls into groups according to the valleys or catchment basins involved. Beginning from the west, there is the Dnieper scheme, covering the north Crimea; then the Don scheme, covering the Volga-Don canal and the Tsimlyanskaya hydro-electric station; then the great Volga schemes, which involve the Middle Volga scheme with the Kuibyshev station, the Lower Volga scheme with the Stalingrad station, and the great Stalin canal; and finally the Amu Darya scheme, which will convert the Kara Kum desert into fertile land.

The schemes are not mere power or irrigation schemes, they include also the shelter-belts and the sowing of local forests, and three main types of irrigation—by gravity feed from canals; by pumping by the hydro-electric stations covering an almost equal area; and by watering with sprinklers and other devices a very large “waterised” area. Beyond that is the stock farm or ranch area where piped water is provided for animals. The forest scheme consists essentially in the planting of wide forest belts by the State; there are five such belts, and I inquired why they are placed where they are. I was told that three were in river valleys and two on watersheds, so that the forest belts have two different functions to fulfil. In the valleys the forest belts are to stem the flow of the surface water down the valleys and keep the valleys as a whole damp, while the intermediate forest belts are planned to hold the water on the watersheds and to let the run-off from the rains and melting snows down gently. The use of these forest belts also depends on aerodynamic or weather effects; the intention is that they shall influence the low-level air movements of the dry winds. It is not a question of bringing more rain to these districts (this may happen but is not counted on) so much as of preventing the water already there from evaporating. Such evaporation mostly occurs as a result of turbulence in the lower levels of the air. If you can prevent this turbulence from the ground, up to about fifty feet, so that the hot dry winds do not blow on the ground itself, the evaporation can be prevented. To do this the most reliance is placed on the tree hedges and copses planted, with Government assistance, by the *Kolkhozes* themselves.

The whole scheme has been very much speeded up by the interesting mode of mechanical planting out of tree seedlings. The planting machines now in use have seven units and cover about fifty feet of front at once. The operators take one- or two-year seedlings one at a time and put them into a rotating clamp, the operation of a machine sets the little tree in the ground, and then the earth is put in after it. When the soil is sand, the seed sown is broadcast from aeroplanes.

Over most of the area the kind of tree used is ordinary deciduous oak; this is being planted specifically because of its long tap roots. I was shown two-year-old oaks two feet high with tap roots twenty-five feet long! They will therefore get water at almost any depth and will flourish even if the upper parts of the soil are dry. In the mountain districts various conifers, particularly pines, are used; in total desert they use a tree called the saxaul, which is a very tough desert tree (not a timber tree but a firewood tree) and can hold drifting sand.

The wind-break forests are to remain as natural forests and will not be cut for timber, but to keep them in good condition sick trees and big trees will be cut out from time to time. They will be used for mushroom-growing and

game-raising. These forests are largely planted by the state at the state's expense; but this does not mean that the local people do not come into the picture. Much of the planting of the smaller wind-break and anti-erosion forests is done by the people of the *kolkhoz* and *agrogorod*, with their own seeds if they have got them or with seeds given to them if the country is poor steppe-land. The people, particularly the young people from the towns, also help in the tree-planting and children from all over the Union collect acorns and other seeds.

I was particularly interested to see how the afforestation schemes worked out in detail. In the Stalingrad region, for example, the right bank of the Volga is high, steep and gullied, and the tree belt (about three miles wide) will follow a winding course along the contours of the watershed. It will be ten to fifteen years before the trees are effective as windbreaks, and fifty years before they are fully grown. All the gullies are being planted with trees, and this is the job of the local people. The whole aspect of the area will be different; when the big dams are built, there will be large lakes about twenty miles wide, in well-wooded country in the place of a gullied hillside with desert across the river.

Besides the general plan there are as many local plans as there are *kolkhoz* in the area, the distance between wind-breaks being about half a mile. The planning for each *kolkhoz* is designed to plant every gully completely with trees and at the same time to dam most of the gullies, thus providing for small power-stations. As far as the planting and lay-out is concerned, this transformation of the countryside will be complete in about three years from now; the trees will of course take a long time to grow.

Now as to the power-stations: five major power-stations, of different characters, together with dozens of smaller ones, are involved in the scheme—those of Kuibyshev, Stalingrad, Tsimlyanskaya, Rostov and Kakhovka. Each of these produces twice as much power as the biggest power-stations. The stations themselves are of very heavy concrete construction, but the dams are for the most part earth dams, the earth being shifted by machinery, for example, an enormous drag-line excavator with a fourteen-cubic-metre grab, all operated by one man: the excavator walks along and does all the work. By means of heavy excavating machines of this type, such constructions are being built very rapidly. All of it should be in working order by 1957 and much of it long before that. The whole scheme is roughly two to three hundred times the size of the Tennessee Valley Authority scheme. Its effect will be to convert every river into a series of lakes separated by dams with power-stations; there will be no flowing river Volga any more, but sea-going ships will go from lake to lake through automatically operated locks. The dams are not high, because the rivers have low falls, but the volume of the water is very large, so that very great power will be developed.

To maintain the supply the watershed itself is being enlarged. If all the irrigation were carried out by means of the Volga, the result would be a great loss of water and consequently the danger of a fall in the level of the Caspian Sea. To avoid this, big dams have been built on the Pechora and Vychegda, which used to flow into the Arctic: these are now being damned up so as to flow back into the tributaries of the Volga. It is possible that ultimately no water will go to the Arctic, where water is of little value; all the water will be turned back to go into the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea or the Aral Depression.

Some of the earlier parts of the scheme, such as the Moscow-Volga Canal, have already been yielding returns. It has meant great additions to the amenities of the capital. The next downstream stage will be associated with the Gorky power-station: between the major lakes there is a series of small power-stations. The lake above the Kuibyshev power-station will be a very large one. It will be three-armed, extending far along the Volga and its tributary the Kama. Kazan will become a lakeside town, and its lower parts will have to be moved. The

Stalingrad station will look after the irrigation of the East Volga plain and will feed an irrigation canal, the Stalin canal linking the Volga with the Ural river.

In some ways the most interesting scheme is the one that is to be completed first. The Tsimlyanskaya plan on the lower Don will be finished next year : most of it is already in place. It makes a big lake extending back to the entrance of the Volga-Don Canal. This is a lock canal, forty-four metres up on one side and eighty-eight metres down on the other, and is fed by local streams. The main purpose of the Don scheme is irrigation rather than power. A series of irrigation canals radiate over the dry steppe country between the rivers. One of them runs along the top of a ridge separating the Don Basin from the Caspian Basin. This addition was one personally suggested by Stalin.

River	Station	Feed	Power mkw	Annual Output Bkwh	Area Irr. mHa	Area Wat. mHa
Volga	Kuibyshev	Central Region	2	10	1	—
	Stalingrad		1.7	10	1.5	11.5
Don	Tsimlyanskaya	Donbas	0.16	0.75	0.75	2
Dnieper	Kakhovka	Ukraine	0.25	1.2	1.5	1.7

Fig. 8

Each of the main power-stations will feed groups of industries, Kuibyshev, mainly the central (Moscow) region ; Stalingrad, the city and the central region ; Tsimlyanskaya, the Donbas ; while Kakhovka power will be added to Dnieproges for Ukrainian industries (Fig. 8). Power transmission will be at half a million volts AC.

The scheme will also provide power for pumping mainly for irrigation purposes. The annual load factor—the difference between the peak and other parts of the load—is balanced by pumping when there is a fall in the industrial demand. Water for irrigation is pumped in the summer months but not in the winter, and thus the load is always balanced. Balancing can also be achieved in another way ; there is a grid covering the area from Moscow to the Urals, with an ultimate spread of three hours in daily time, and the demand for electricity thus flows along and a good deal of the normal daytime variation does not occur.

The last scheme, the Turkmen Canal, is the most exciting of all, a really terrific effort. The canal is about 800 miles long. Despite the legends, the old river bed of the Uzboi that winds through the Kara-Kum desert has not held water since the late Tertiary period ; the river stopped flowing because there was a slight earth movement along the axis of the Caucasus uplift. This will now be made good by cutting through the upper part and thus letting the river Amu Darya go back to its original bed and flow into its delta on the Caspian sea. This is now clay desert with no source of water whatever : but it will become one of the wealthiest agricultural districts. It is about equivalent to the whole of the irrigated area of Egypt. Being at about latitude 38, it is sub-tropical, and will grow dates and sugar cane that have not normally grown in the Soviet Union. The northern areas will grow mostly cotton.

The scientists told me a great deal about how they had planned the scheme for the Kara-Kum desert. It is not a rash idea : it is based on twenty years of research ; but the research is now more intensive and extensive than before. I talked to the academic director, Professor Kovda, about the part that science plays in all this, and about the scale of work. (He is himself a soil scientist). The whole scientific work involves 650 scientists, with five million

roubles as expenses; he has 150 scientists in his particular detachment. They will be in the field for five years, until the scheme is in full operation, when it will acquire its permanent establishment.

The scientists are chosen to cover the whole range of interests; that is to say, there are hydrologists, navigation experts, electrical experts, every kind of engineer, soil scientists, zoologists, botanists, geologists; there are also geophysicists and seismologists, particularly in one area where earthquakes are to be feared and the dams have to be designed to be earthquake proof.

Besides all these, there are the archæologists, who are considered a very important part of the scheme. One of their tasks is to make quite sure that nothing of value is lost; areas half the size of England are going to be covered with water, and as these areas are river-valleys there will probably be objects of archæological value there; these will have to be lifted before the water is allowed to overrun the land. The archæologists also have to spot all traces of earlier cultivation; they are provided with a flight of aeroplanes, and they map from the air. They are thus often able to find disused irrigation channels, which can be cleared and used again, instead of having to dig new channels. Most of the eastern area of the Amu Darya basin was once ancient Khorezm cultivated land, which went out of cultivation because of the invasions of the Tartars and later from unchecked drifting sand. There will be no more sand now, because it will be held back by a 500 mile long forest barrier.

The study of the soil in these and other regions is given special attention. One of the troubles they encounter is the sulphate in the soil. To deal with this they are using gypsum and newer methods. I asked whether they could not use the sulphate industrially—remembering our shortages. I was told that in the Gulf of Kara Bugaz there is enough sulphate to meet all the world's needs for a thousand years; it is pure sodium sulphate and just needs digging up. There is no sulphur shortage in the Soviet Union. One of the effects of the Volga-Don canal scheme due for completion next year might be that British ships could sail right up to the gulf, load the stuff and take it away.

I now come to how all this fits in with the life of the people. I have already shown how the *kolkhoz* are involved; I have mentioned that they are damming their streams and putting up power-stations. I asked whether it was really economical to build thousand-kilowatt plants when million-kilowatt plants were being built, and whether the capital charge of the small plants was not excessive in comparison with transformers. The chief engineer replied that they considered it an essential part of the scheme that each *kolkhoz* should make the best of its own power resources. To do this they had to work together; they did so by pooling their resources and building small towns, the new *agrorods*, with amenities such as theatres and secondary schools unobtainable in villages, each with its own power-station. Even if the small plants are uneconomic, their construction and use will train all the people in the proper appreciation of electricity; so the difference in cost has been ignored—it is an educational expense, a saving in the long run: besides, the power from the small plants is extra, and every bit helps.

Lenin's idea of the importance of electricity to socialism is coming into being. Electric power already replaces other power for all static engineering work in the *kolkhoz*, which have their own stations providing their own power. Most of the *kolkhoz* are rich; they buy small hydro-electric plants, the mass-produced thousand-kilowatt plants. The oil tractor, though about 150,000 are turned out every year, is already obsolete and is being replaced by the electric tractor: these electric tractors are something like vacuum-cleaners in that they trail their cable behind them as they go. In the future they will do most of the agricultural work. Even the river steamers are being converted to electric trolley boats.

The principle in all the extensive new planning is to involve the *kolkhozs* and *agrorods* in all the operations ; in this way a very wealthy, very effective industrial agriculture will be built up on a really popular democratic basis. The new *agrorod* will have its own machine-tractor stations, electric tractor stations and industrial shops ; it is an integration of all the social forces. From the policy point of view the whole thing is an immense capital investment, bigger than any there has ever been in any country at any time till now. It will take up something of the order of fifty million tons of steel, that is about two years' total output for the Soviet Union, but it will be spread over a number of years. This capital expenditure represents a sort of polarisation of the whole people ; machinery is flowing into the area from all over the Soviet Union, to be returned in the form of dates and cotton and other things when the scheme starts working. It is an investment by the whole Soviet Union in its own estate, an estate equal to the whole of the cultivated area of the United States and about twice that of Western Europe.

It must be emphasised that this investment is necessarily of a peaceful nature. The reinforcement bars cannot be taken out of the dams and turned into tanks. There is no sign of this development slackening or of attention being diverted to anything else : that physical fact is the greatest guarantee of peace that we have in the world today.

REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

(The audience were asked to submit written questions, the replies to which are here summarised.)

PROFESSOR BERNAL said that he was unable to answer detailed technical questions on architecture, construction costs, transmission of electricity, batching of concrete, and so on, but that the answers to some at any rate of these questions could probably be obtained from the SCR reference library of technical journals.

He could answer a question on the cost of land in Moscow : the cost of land is nothing at all. Land is taken as it is required by the planning authorities, and there is no question of ground-rent or compensation or anything of that kind. As to working hours, he said that the Russians work eight hours a day and usually six days a week, with two or three weeks' holiday.

On a number of questions relating to architectural style, he said : In this country architecture is a matter of taste, and it is impossible to argue about it, but in the Soviet Union it is considered a matter not of taste but of principle. The Russians want a certain amount of excitement and variety in their architecture, and they have quite a lot of theory about it ; the Soviet buildings carry a certain amount of ornament, but that does not mean they are not highly functional as far as the internal working and construction are concerned. They are quite as functional as, and more effectively weather-resistant than, many of our modern architectural productions.

To a technical question about joints, Professor Bernal replied : The Russians have been worried—as we have—about joints, particularly with the huge blocks they use. They are now using a material called hydrophobic cement* which prevents weeping at the joints (a trouble connected with large blocks). They admit that some of the material used in the 1930s is showing very bad wear : but they do not regard themselves as responsible for anything more than five years old, which they regard as old-fashioned. Building styles are changing ; columns, for example, are now being used in a more restrained way than they were a few years ago.

On town-planning he said : It is as modern as can be, in every sense. The town-planning of Moscow, the layout of the streets and the locating of the buildings, have been done in such a way that the whole forms a very fine panorama ; the scale of the town area is such that the big buildings are absolutely right to scale. The ensemble type of construction is much more effective in reality than in the architect's picture, not—as might be thought—the other way round.

Pre-stressed concrete—he said—is being used in a very big way ; there are factories for making pre-stressed units, and these units are being assembled in various ways.

On the use of coal for steam generators, he said : I took this up with the director of hydro-electric plants, suggesting that owing to the wonderful navigation system the Soviet Union could now transport coal more easily. The director replied : "I do not think

* See *VOKS Bulletin*, 1950, No. 64, page 38.

coal is at all a suitable source of power; getting it is hard on the miners, and it is very much better to do without it and depend for electricity on hydro-electric power." The total schemes [*Those described above.—Ed.*] still only represent a utilisation of about 2% or 4% of the water power available in the Soviet Union, a negligible amount, big as they are. In the next series of plans it is intended to use the far vaster resources of the Siberian rivers, partly for power and partly for irrigation of the Aral-Caspian basin by a vast scheme of deepening the Turgai gap.

As regards other fuels, Professor Bernal mentioned peat as a source of steam-raising power. The Soviet's peat resources are comparable to its coal resources, and are hundreds of times its oil resources. Only the unusable parts of the peat are burnt, the wax and other industrial products being extracted. Peat is the main source of power in the northern regions.

To the many questions on atomic energy he replied: I did not see very much about it on my visit; I talked to one or two of the atomic-power people some time ago, and I can give an answer in general terms. The Soviet Union considers the present proposals in America and Britain for using an atomic pile to raise steam and operate a turbine rather childish; they consider the proper use of atomic energy to be in combine with chemical manufacture, so that the whole of the energy of the piles and their protective shields may be made use of. They are thinking in terms of complete atomic combine sets, in which they get a total use of atomic energy in the way of turning out chemical products, plastics and other things, as well as power. Atomic power does not figure in any of the schemes I have mentioned, but it may be used in connection with some of them; it would be possible to carry out a good deal of direct blasting in the desert areas with atomic bombs. As the projects are long-term ones the radio-activity problem will be overcome. The Soviet Union is not, however, neglecting any sources of power in favour of using atomic power; every bit of natural power possible will be extracted.

Asked whether these great schemes replaced the five-year plans, he replied: The schemes are an extra; they are *ad hoc* schemes, which cover only a very small part of the Union economy. The general plans go on quite separately; these schemes are in no sense a substitute for the five-year plans. The next general plan might, of course, be a ten-year plan.

On electric power for the Moscow region, he said: This is really the central industrial area of the whole Union; it has a highly industrialised population of about twenty million and a very considerable demand for power. A sufficient supply of electrical power will obviate the need to transport a great deal of coal from the Donbas region; and the high transmitting potential means that power losses in transmission will be relatively small. The electrical engineers have considerable experience of increasing the length of their transmission lines stage by stage and raising their potentials—they are very confident that later they will be able to achieve even greater economies by the use of direct current transmission.

Professor Bernal was not able to answer detailed technical questions on afforestation, but said: The Russians have all kinds of dodges for planting trees in clusters or groups, but I did not discover anything about making them grow very fast after planting. The main forest belts are two or three miles wide, the minor ones only twenty or thirty yards. The Russians are particularly concerned about the natural life of the forests; they are being stocked with every kind of natural game, and the hunting rights enjoyed by the *kolkhoz* will, it is hoped, give people many more delicacies for their larders. It is also expected that these new forests will help provide that characteristic national Russian dish, mushrooms. Forest mushrooms are a very big source of extra food.

To questions about general irrigation, he replied: Only 60% of the flow of the Amu Darya is being taken for irrigation purposes, and the rest is going into the Aral Sea. The level of the Aral has been rising, and this has brought about a change in climate. It is expected that the present level can be kept constant. One questioner says that a lot of water will be required if it is intended to irrigate an area equal to Egypt: but a lot of water is available. Actually the irrigation system of Egypt is very inefficient. Most of the Nile water flows uselessly into the Mediterranean. An area about ten times the size of the Nile valley could be irrigated with the waters of the Nile used in a scheme similar to the one I have dealt with here. Another questioner suggests that if the northern waters are deflected from the Arctic it will become saltier and will not freeze so easily, and that this will reduce the polar ice. Professor Bernal said he had not thought of this; certainly there would be some such effect; but this is a very long-term matter, and he did not think we should live to see the effect.

Asked about the Soviet Union's attitude towards the possibility of being blown to bits in a war, Professor Bernal said: The Soviet Government takes the view that it will not happen, and everything that is being done there bears this out. The Moscow University is not being built for an atomic age; if it were, it would be built a hundred feet below the surface of the earth. The Soviet Union could build an atom-proof university if it wanted to; but it is building the university on the surface, and considers it will not get atom bombs on it.



One questioner asked whether in Soviet construction projects speed was achieved by sacrificing refinements. He replied: The reverse seems to be the case. I saw the inside work for the University and found it incredible. Every room, up to fourteen floors, has the type of plaster work that is not now put into building in this country (there is probably hardly anyone in this country now who knows how to do it). There is no lack of that kind of refinement in their building work. They are not sacrificing any refinements for speed; they may be sacrificing speed for refinements.



On Georgia, he said: With its cash crops of tea, silk and so on, Georgia is making money, and the collective farms are getting extremely rich. Universities have been built, and the people have gone in for higher education; the result has been an over-production of doctors of philosophy; Georgian scientists are therefore going to other, less far-advanced, Republics. This will not last long, for there is no shortage of scientific or higher education in the Soviet Union; it really is fantastically large-scale in this way and there will be more and more scope for the products of higher education.



To a question on the work of Lepeshinskaya, he said: I was able to have about three hours' discussion with her. I cannot here go into her work in detail, but what she has done is to study the growth of organisms from non-cellular substance; she has conducted this work with the developing egg, with the hydra (a little water animal), and with wound-tissue. In all cases cells have grown up from undifferentiated tissue not containing cells. The work has been going on for about twenty years; she has only just reported on it. The work has been published, and I studied the pictures very carefully; they are an essential part of the book, for everything depends on what is seen in the microscope. In the yolk of an egg there is a little part called the germinal streak, which turns into a chicken; later, as the embryo chicken grows, the rest of the yolk turns into a bag, the yolk sac, which is covered with a network of veins. It has always been assumed that the veins and the blood cells of the yolk sac grow out from the chicken into the yolk. Lepeshinskaya has isolated parts of the egg away from the chicken and has studied them microscopically in a tissue culture; she has also made films of the development process. The yolk is full of fat; under a microscope it looks like a mass of fat globules. As the egg is incubated, the fat globules seem to get smaller and smaller, and round them grow cells which organise themselves into fine blood-vessels, which link up into the veins and then join the circulatory system of the chicken embryo. Blood cells seem also to be formed in the same way.

At first sight this seems rather absurd. How can fat change into cells? But this, in fact, is not asserted. Lepeshinskaya's opinion is not that fat globules change into cells, but that cells replace the fat globules, which is not the same thing. In the first stage the fat globules can be seen occupying most of the area; then black dots can be seen around the globules throughout the whole of the yolk. The matrix in which the fat globules lie is a material with a great deal of nucleo-protein in it; it is this that is growing and forming the new cells. The fat globules disappear in a metabolic process for which they provide the energy. There is no cell to start with; but there is at the end. According to her we are witnessing the natural growth of a cell from less defined but fully organic material.

Some biologists seem to find this shocking: according to Virchow every cell must come directly from another; but it occurs in many parts of nature. One cannot talk of a cell at all in the case of mycetozoa and many phases of other organisms. There may be large chunks of living material which have no cell but at a later stage can divide into cellular units.

This Lepeshinskaya thinks occurs in damaged tissue. It would seem that in a wound the material from the broken-down cells contains nucleo-protein which can organise itself into scar tissue. This she thinks has practical possibilities for wound treatment.



In conclusion Professor Bernal said: Very much of my information is secondhand, but very live research is going on in the Soviet Union at the present moment, and I hope that those in the delegation of the SCR later on will be able to judge for themselves in these matters.

THE TEACHING OF BRITISH HISTORY IN THE USSR

By Christopher Hill

A HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION pamphlet, *Russia—Notes on a Course for Modern Schools*, published two or three years ago, began with these words: "A term's work on Russia can hardly fail to be popular with children, and at the same time educationally important. But . . . it presents real difficulties. . . . Books for class use are few and unsuitable." I suspect the position has not changed substantially since then. I do not believe that many boys and girls leave British schools with the sort of historical understanding of Russian civilisation that would help them to an informed judgment of the USSR today. How is it with the teaching of British history in Soviet schools? The impression is often given in this country that Soviet education is a matter of ideological indoctrination, and that Soviet citizens are kept in ignorance of the outside world; so a few facts may be helpful.

There is a great tradition of Russian scholarship dealing with British history, especially medieval history, which goes back before the Revolution. Vinogradov was Professor both in Oxford and in Moscow, and most of his works were published in English. Some of A. N. Savine's writings on English history were also translated into English many years ago. Their pupils and successors, Professors Petrushevsky, Kosminsky, Arkhangelsky, Lavrovsky, Semeonov, have continued this tradition under the Soviet regime: their names are familiar to professional historians in Britain. So at Soviet Universities there is a very active school of historians of Great Britain. When I was studying in Moscow in 1936, my notebooks reveal that I read fifteen books and thirty articles on seventeenth-century British history: at least as much again has been published since then. In 1950, for instance, *Voprosi Istorii*, the leading Soviet historical journal, carried three articles, two review-articles, and one bibliographical article, dealing with British history.

In the whole Soviet educational system, British history plays a special part, because of the British contribution to liberty. The beginning of the English Revolution (1640) is taken as the dividing line between medieval and modern history (as our schools take 1485, the accession of Henry VII). A textbook used in teachers' training colleges says: "The English Revolution of the sixteen-forties may be compared in significance with the second great bourgeois revolution, the French Revolution of 1789; and the English Revolution forms the border between the history of the Middle Ages and modern times, leading into the course of modern history." In the textbook used in schools, the English Revolution is described as ushering in the period of world history that lasts until 1917: that is, a Soviet child learns to regard it as comparable in world historical significance with the October Revolution.

A word here about the textbooks from which I have already quoted. In Great Britain, school textbooks are a commodity, produced by publishers in search of profits. The fittest perhaps survive, in time, but the only guarantee of a textbook's accuracy is the reputation of the author and of the publisher. In the USSR—as in most continental countries—textbooks for schools are produced under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. History textbooks are edited in the USSR by professional university historians of world-wide reputation. *The History of the Middle Ages*, the prescribed textbook for children aged thirteen to fifteen, is edited by Professor E. A. Kosminsky, an expert on

English history, whose work is well known in this country. The more advanced textbook on the same subject used by teachers' training colleges is edited by Professor Semeonov, another well-known authority on English history. Of the textbooks on modern history, that covering 1789-1870 (for fifteen to sixteen year olds) is edited by Professor Yefimov, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences; that dealing with 1870-1918 (for sixteen to seventeen year olds) is the joint production of four university professors. I have carefully examined these four books and can testify to their high level of factual accuracy—though, of course, I should disagree on some points of interpretation. These textbooks are used in all, or nearly all, Russian-speaking Soviet schools. Thus, in making comparisons of them with our textbooks, we should think not of the best modern textbooks used in a few select schools, but of those in the widest use in the mass of schools.

Since school textbooks in the USSR are edited by university professors, the results of the best historical research are passed straight on to the schools. There is not the thirty years' time-lag that exists in Britain between history as taught in the universities and as taught in the *mass* of the schools. There are not two levels of history teaching, and the universities do not have to waste time making students unlearn what they have learnt wrong at school. The opposite defect, textbooks whose methods of presentation is above the heads of schoolchildren, is avoided by discussion-meetings between the editors of textbooks and practising schoolteachers.

The textbooks I have mentioned cover the age-groups thirteen to seventeen. The course is completed by one year on the history of the USSR (for seventeen to eighteen year olds). Ancient history is studied by the twelve to thirteen age-group. (In the elementary classes, for ages seven to eleven, history is not studied.) So every Soviet child who completes a secondary school education has been through a course of world history. No skipping is allowed from one class to another except in very special circumstances. In consequence (I quote the words of an English schoolteacher who taught for many years in the USSR) —“By the time a pupil has finished school, he has a wide concept of world history and is very well able to judge the events of today. I was struck time and time again when talking to older children in the Soviet schools by their clear ideas and comprehensive knowledge. I often thought of my own confused study of history at school; it was a mixture of dates, kings and their wives, and various wars, the real objects of which I was never taught.”*

If we ask how many Soviet children in fact get this full secondary school education, the answer appears to be about one out of every three. The full course is available in the towns for all children who wish to take advantage of it. For factory workers who for one reason or another failed to complete their secondary education there are four-year evening classes which will bring them up to university matriculation level. So most town children get full secondary education. In the countryside the proportion is smaller, but there are evening classes at collective farms too.

It may be of interest to analyse the hours spent on British history by a typical Soviet child who completes the secondary school course. In the weekly programmes, in age-group twelve to fifteen, two or three hours out of twenty-seven to thirty-two will be spent on history; in the fifteen to eighteen age-group this rises to four or five hours. Age-group thirteen to fourteen studies early medieval history in Europe and Asia, covering the Roman Empire, Byzantium, Persia, the Arabs, India, China, the Crusades, towns and trade, West European culture, the Empire and the Papacy, the Mongol conquests. Here, of a total of thirty-one hours, plus eight hours revision, one hour is devoted to English history in the ninth to eleventh centuries—a fair enough proportion.

* *Children in Soviet Russia*. By Deana Levin. p. 156 (1942).

The next year (fourteen to fifteen) continues the study of European and Asiatic history down to the eighteenth century. The work here falls into three groups of subjects. The first (individual countries in the Middle Ages, including China, Japan, the fall of Byzantium, the decline of the Catholic Church) takes twenty-one hours; of these, England in the twelfth to fifteenth centuries gets four hours—the same as France and Germany, more than Spain and Czechoslovakia. The second group of subjects (geographical discoveries, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, scientific and technical developments) occupies twenty-seven hours, of which British history gets four, in addition to a good deal of attention under the headings like "the Reformation", "scientific and technical developments", and so on. Of the third group, thirteen hours devoted to the beginning of modern times, Britain gets eight as contrasted with three for France and two for Germany.

In the following year (fifteen to sixteen), the work may be summarised as follows: (a) 1789-1815, twenty-five hours, of which five are devoted to British history (France has eighteen); (b) 1815-1848, twenty-one hours, of which three are on British history; (c) 1848-1870, nineteen hours, of which four deal with British history, over and above extensive references to Britain under "technology", "natural sciences", "social and economic developments", and so on. The USA and Japan begin to receive more attention from this point onwards.

In age-group sixteen to seventeen, in the study of modern history (1870-1918), of a total of seventy-one hours given to world history, Great Britain gets seven, in addition to what is contained under "international relations" and "the war of 1914-18". Thus, of a total of 228 hours spent on the study of world history, no less than thirty-six are devoted exclusively to British history—nearly one in every six. This presents a rather startling contrast to the emphasis on Russian history in British schools. Making every possible allowance, it is surely fair to suggest that in the last three centuries the history of Russia has been almost as important for Britain as the history of Britain for Russia. Yet in how many British schools is an average of two hours every three weeks throughout the course devoted exclusively to Russian history?

One or two points are worth noting about the programme I have outlined. First, British history (and, even more important, Russian history too) is studied in a European setting, or rather a world setting. The Tudor monarchy, for instance, is treated as a special case of those absolute monarchies that arose all over Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Secondly, a great deal of attention is given to individual countries, of which Britain is one. This is a relatively new emphasis. In a school textbook used before 1933, compiled under the influence of the Pokrovsky school, there was no separate chapter on any individual country between the fall of the Roman Empire and the German Reformation. We may contrast the words of Professor Semeonov in his above-cited textbook: "Frenchmen, Englishmen, and other contemporary people of Europe, with their national characteristics and peculiarities, can only be properly understood if we know the history of their beginnings, which is to be sought in the Middle Ages." In notes issued for the use of history teachers in Soviet schools, they are urged to bring out detailed historical differences between the various countries, but in revision to help the children to see social and economic processes as a wider whole.

I extract one or two other points of interest from the notes issued for the guidance of teachers: (1) They are advised to eschew the anecdotal style, stories about great men. Soviet children will remember King Alfred not as the man who burnt the cakes but as a great educational reformer. (2) Idealisation of the Middle Ages is deprecated, especially of the militaristic and "chivalrous" aspects of feudalism. (3) Teachers are urged to illustrate lessons by drawing on the literature of the several countries. More, Shakespeare, Milton and Dickens are quoted or referred to in the sections on British history in the school text-

books : Jack London is used as well as blue books to illustrate social conditions in Britain. (4) An emphasis on educational, scientific, philosophical and technical achievements is recommended. In the textbooks, Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon, Harvey, Hobbes, Locke, Newton, Darwin and Huxley all receive attention, together with a great number of mechanical inventions.

Maps are used with great effect all through the textbooks. For example, two railway maps of Britain in the eighteen-forties and eighteen-seventies, printed side by side, bring out in the clearest way the great development between these dates.

Visual aids are not forgotten. The Griboyedov Girls' Secondary School No. 29 in Moscow uses the following aids to British history : a framed reproduction of the Bayeux tapestry ; a full-size photo copy of Magna Carta ; a model of a medieval castle ; a chart of the episodes of the English Revolution ; coloured portraits of Queen Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, Oliver Cromwell, and so on. In an out-of-school study circle at the same school one girl wrote an essay on the Chartist movement, another on Anglo-American intervention in North Russia in 1918-20 ; a boys' school acted scenes from the English civil war in costume.

Here are some interpretations of British history that struck me while working through the sections in the books dealing with Great Britain. It will be realised that I have picked out mainly points of *difference* : a great deal of factual material is presented in a way only slightly different from British textbooks.

The school textbook emphasises that Magna Carta was a charter of liberties for feudal lords. The towns won some concessions by it, but the mass of the population, the serfs, got nothing. The textbook used in teachers' training colleges puts rather more emphasis on the progressive significance of Magna Carta and on the first appearance in 1215 of the English third estate as a political factor. The school textbook treats the assembly of 1265 as the first English Parliament, containing representatives of counties and boroughs. Edward I is not mentioned in this connection. There follows a full account of the development of Parliament through its control of taxation. The more advanced textbook deals with Edward I's Parliaments : it makes clear the point that Parliament was not an assembly that represented the whole population. The J.P.s are described as instituted to protect the class interests of the gentry against the masses of the population. The position of the peasantry, and the revolt of 1381, receive six pages and an illustration in the school textbook, and very good pages they are (This is one of Kosminsky's special interests.) Wyclif is not mentioned, though in the more advanced book he is given two pages. In dealing with the Crusades, the gain to Western culture from contact with the higher civilisation of the East is noted.

The analysis of the Tudor monarchy is interesting. Kosminsky says the gentry and bourgeoisie needed a strong central power (*a*) against the peasantry and growing pauper class at home, (*b*) against national rivals abroad like Spain, France and the Netherlands. Semeonov says the social basis of the Tudor monarchy was the new landlords and gentry, with the bourgeoisie as secondary support. Unlike continental absolutism, the Tudor monarchy worked with Parliament. Both Semeonov and Kosminsky lay stress on the sixteenth-century industrial development : Kosminsky seems to me even to overestimate the encouragement given to trade and industry by the Elizabethan government.

In dealing with Calvinism (a difficult subject for the Soviet child), the following points are emphasised : (*a*) the influence of elders (the rich and the gentry) in the Calvinist organisation ; (*b*) the importance of that organisation, especially its military importance ; (*c*) Calvinism cannot simply be described as the ideology of the bourgeoisie, but it spread widely where the bourgeoisie was fighting for power against the feudal state, and led easily on to republican

doctrines; (d) the intolerance of Calvinism is noted. Semeonov has a more sophisticated passage discussing the appropriateness of Calvinist theology to an age of accumulation of capital.

I have already quoted what the books have to say about the seventeenth-century revolution. England, after its bourgeois revolution, the Soviet child is taught, was the most advanced country in the world. Interesting passages deal with the history of the British Empire: the importance of the British seizure of Jamaica for the development of the negro slave trade to America is brought out. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 and the forcible opening-up of China in the Opium Wars (both with illustrations) look rather different from the same events as normally presented in British textbooks. The later history of India is illuminated by factual statements, such as that ten million Indians died of starvation between 1896 and 1906; or that the average expectation of life for Indians was twenty-four years while for Britons it was forty-six years. The relationship of sea power to the possession of an overseas empire is shown; and full justice is done to Britain's pre-eminence as "the workshop of the world" (the phrase is quoted).

An interesting new slant, made possible by the USSR's own experience in building socialism, is a contrast between capitalist and socialist industrialisation, which is implicit all through the account of the industrial revolution in Britain and other capitalist countries. Here, capital was first accumulated from the colonies, from piracy, and from various forms of overseas trade barely distinguishable from plunder: capitalist countries developing later rely on foreign loans, sometimes jeopardising their independence in doing so. In the USSR accumulation had to come solely from the savings and sacrifices made by its own people. In capitalist countries, industrialisation normally begins with the light industries, producing consumer goods: heavy industry follows later. But the planned socialist economy of the USSR began by laying the basis in heavy industry. In the same way, planning, and the absence of the profit motive, made it possible to avoid many of the sufferings incident under capitalism to the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society: enclosure, eviction, pauperisation, vagabondage, crowded and insanitary factories, female and child labour. Machines can be used in a socialist society to shorten the hours of labour, and this can happen without desperate working-class struggle such as won the Ten-hours Bill in Britain in the teeth of employers' opposition. In all these matters, from his own practical experience, the Soviet child has a very different historical perspective from that which is given to British children. He sees many historical evils neither as inevitable nor as the result of the wickedness of individuals, but as a result of a defective social system. This is not a matter of propaganda, of indoctrination: it is a matter of experienced fact. The Soviet child has to learn *as history* what economic crises and unemployment are, that there are societies in which the social services are not controlled by workers' delegates elected through trade unions.

But the British working-class movement is given a very honourable place in the Soviet teaching of history. Lenin is quoted to the effect that "England gave the world the first broad, really mass, politically formed proletarian revolutionary organisation, Chartism": and great emphasis is laid on the historical significance of Chartism. The nineteenth-century school textbook points out that the British industrial workers won the right to organise earlier than the workers of other countries. To this in part is to be attributed their rather better economic position than that of continental workers, though the possession of an overseas empire also brought benefits to a privileged upper stratum of the working class. The British contribution to Marxism is brought out, notably the economic theories of Adam Smith and Ricardo.

In analysing the causes of the war of 1914-18, the textbook holds the imperialists of all countries responsible, but says that the German imperialists

hastened it. British war aims as defined in the Soviet textbook look rather different from the statement of war aims in our textbooks : the partition of the Turkish Empire, the oil of Iraq, security of communications to India, and defence of the whole Empire against German attack. Throughout the treatment of the war of 1914-18 the emphasis is on its destructiveness, the human suffering and loss of life that it caused, and on the contribution this made to bringing about the October Revolution in the USSR. Their country was born, Soviet children are taught, in a great struggle for peace : and an important part of the international significance of the October Revolution is stated to have been that it showed a way of escape from imperialism and war.

The following general points about history teaching in the USSR seem to me to emerge from this survey :

(1) History is not thought of as that mysterious thing beloved of British educationists, a “discipline.” The phrase as used in Britain appears to mean that the important thing is not what is learnt but the process of learning—any old thing will do as the subject. The Soviet curriculum in history presents a full and carefully planned and balanced programme of factual knowledge, which all children receive and on the basis of which they should all be able to approach current affairs intelligently.

(2) History is for the Soviet child not the history of his own country first and foremost, with other countries as an occasional and fluctuating background. He begins by learning a great deal about world history, and then studies the history of his own country in that perspective.

(3) The decisive breach of the revolution of 1917 has made possible a radical re-evaluation of the history of the USSR. The Soviet child is taught to be critical of many aspects of his own country's past, and yet to be proud of the real human achievements of the Soviet people. This was brought out in the sections in the textbook dealing with the Crimean War. The futility of the war, the incompetence and corruption of the higher command and the government, were fully revealed, and yet the defence of Sevastopol was treated as the epic of rank-and-file courage that it was. Wars of conquest, particularly wars building up the Russian Empire, need no longer be praised or apologised for, since the Russian Empire and colonial subordination no longer exist. Now that the former colonial peoples are free and equal citizens of the Soviet Republics, the history of their past looms larger in the Soviet curriculum, including their struggles for liberation.

(4) The Soviet child is taught that history is a science. The division between medieval and modern history at 1640 illustrates this point. For in that year a revolution began in which a king was tried and executed by his subjects, a Republic and the sovereignty of the people proclaimed, the House of Lords and the established Church abolished. There is sense in saying that such events usher in modern history, sense which a child can appreciate. It is more difficult to explain the reasons for starting modern history with the accession of a new family of kings or a French invasion of Italy.

(5) The Soviet child is taught, too, that history has a meaning. The study of changing social and economic formations, the succession primitive communism—ancient society based on slavery—feudal society—capitalist society—socialism, gives history a framework. In studying such development the child can see the real progress that has been made by humanity. History is not just one damn thing after another, a confusing jumble of unrelated facts. It offers as little ground for despair at the powerlessness of man as it does for facile optimism. Defective social organisation is seen as the fundamental cause of crime and unhappiness, not human sinfulness. For history is made by the struggles of men and women.

(6) The Soviet child is taught a deep sympathy with the underdog. In the history of Britain, for instance, 1381, 1640, and the Chartists receive proportionately

far more space in Soviet than in British textbooks. Nineteenth-century factory workers are shown fighting back against the horrors of early industrialism. We speak glibly of "the century of the common man," yet popular revolt against oppression (and especially colonial revolt) tends always to be rather squeamishly handled in our school books. Social history becomes a matter of costumes and folk-dancing, not of popular struggle. The Soviet emphasis seems to me one of deep humanity, yet the Marxist framework saves their historians from sentimentalism: they can see, for instance, the British bourgeoisie as a great progressive force in the seventeenth century, applaud their victories, while still remembering that they were an exploiting class, and while having a rather different attitude towards the British ruling class of today. If the Soviet child is indoctrinated, it is with a passion for social progress, a deep respect for men and women of all nations who have contributed to what Francis Bacon called "the relief of man's estate."

(7) Finally, the Soviet child is given an international outlook. The USSR is a commonwealth of equal nations, stretching between Europe and Asia, and its children, as we have seen, study world history. They know from their own experience that humanity is one, that a Tadzhik or a Jew is the brother of a Russian. They learn that national peculiarities are the product of history, and that men and women of all countries have contributed to a pool of human achievement, on all of which Soviet man is proud to draw and for which he gives historical credit where it is due. In particular he values the British contribution to science and technical development, to literature and to political liberty. History is an important subject if world peace is to be maintained.

Linguistics and the Writer

We give below a further bibliographical list related to the article *LINGUISTICS AND THE WRITER*, by Henry Gifford, which appeared in the last issue of the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* (Vol. XII, No. 2).

1. The Work of A. N. Tolstoy on "Words" in Literature.—*Znamya*, 4, 51.
2. The work of L. N. Tolstoy on "Words" in Literature.—*Oktyabr*, 6, 51.
3. Report of special meeting of language and literature teaching staffs, May 15-19, 1951, to discuss Soviet literary criticism in the light of the Soviet linguistics discussions.—*Izvestia Akad. Nauk, Otdelenie Literatury i Yazyka*, Vol. X, No. 3, 1951.

A S J MOSCOW LETTER

From Ralph Parker



SUMMER HOLIDAY

BY the time these lines appear in print, the garden outside Moscow where they are being written will no longer be the meeting place of a group of Russians spending the summer in one of the *dacha* settlements in the city's Green Belt. Only a few fading tobacco flowers will remain in the borders—now aglow with full-blown peonies and lupins—encircling the wooden cottage, one of some forty or fifty that workers of the Hammer and Sickle steel works have built near the village—that same Obiralovka that Leo Tolstoy chose as the setting for Anna Karenina's suicide.

The company that gathers in this garden as the daylight fades, and the boughs of the spruces and the birches turn to lace against the western sky, are not the *dachniki* of Gorky's well-known play of that name, the vain, unhappy, debt-ridden, flabby people of the first decade of this century. They are working people, or the children of working people, to whom the idea of owning a flat in Moscow and a summer cottage outside would have been quite inconceivable in those days. Rogov is a shop foreman, a tall, lanky, middle-aged man with unruly grey hair and an uncertain reedy voice. His neighbour Fomin, who has spent thirty years in the rolling mill, is more deliberate in speech and manner: when he offers an opinion on anything, you may be sure that the words "the principle of the thing" will crop up before long. Fomin works on the night shift, and he usually has to leave our company when discussion is at its liveliest, to change into his dark working suit and go off to the factory. Sometimes his departure coincides with the arrival of Yermilov, who is lodging at the Fomins' for the third summer running. Yermilov is now a timekeeper at the Stalin automobile works (ZIS). Before the war he was a fitter in the gears section, but he lost his right hand defending Moscow at the approaches to Narofominsk, and was given non-manual work on demobilisation. He spent his fortnight's holiday mainly in reading. Among the books he had brought with him were the two latest volumes (IV and V in the set of fifty) of the big Soviet Encyclopedia. He seemed to be reading them through quite methodically. An occasional visitor to the group at the rough-hewn plank table under the pine trees is an ex-sergeant major employed as superintendent by the *dacha* settlement Co-operative. Arkin is a wiry, ginger-haired man with restless eyes and an abrupt manner of speech. He is fond of company: when he wants his pal from the other side of the settlement to join him in a drink, he fires a green flare from a supply he has somehow managed to retain.

The younger generation is represented by Fomin's daughter Natasha (who is in her third year at a *tekhnikum* studying tele-communications), Lyuba Rogov (who graduated last year at an Institute of Foreign Literature and is now a translator), Yermilov's son Fyodor (who is on military service), and one or two students from the Electro-Technical Institute.

Does it surprise you to learn that much of our talk this summer has been about literature and art and the theatre? Of course, the situation in the Far East, the French elections, the harvest prospects, and certain technical matters concerning the factory, have come up. The tenth anniversary of Hitler's

invasion of their land brought its mood of deep and sad reflection on the immense cost of victory. It was from such quiet holiday places as this that so many men returned in haste that Sunday morning to report for active service, that so many children were gathered up for evacuation far beyond the Volga.

Whenever accounts of the workers' movement abroad appeared in the newspapers they were eagerly read and discussed. Enough was said on such occasions to prove up to the hilt the falsity of those who seek to justify their own policy towards the Soviet Union by asserting that the Soviet people are being taught to hate "the West". Indeed, it often seemed to us that we were in the company of those Socialists whose spiritual affinity with the workers of the whole world Gorky described so well in *Mother*. The affinity Rogov and Fomin and their student children feel for the workers beyond their frontiers is the same that Gorky's Pavel and Natasha and Nakhodka felt.

What is the literary taste of such people? Perhaps the most profitable way of posing that question would be to ask how current Soviet literature, theatre and cinema appeal to them. One will perhaps arrive at a clearer understanding of Soviet culture by trying to look at it through the eyes of those it is meant for.

Our first discovery on this approach to the question is that these Soviet working people are enormous devourers of literature. Statistics on the steady sale of the classics, the popularity of poetry, the support given to the theatre, are impressive enough as they stand; they come to life, however, when one hears Rogov and Fomin using characters from Goncharov and Gorky—yes, and Shakespeare and Dickens too—to illustrate their own speech, when Natasha returns from a Gorky commemoration meeting and tells of the 16,000 audience that attended it in the Green Theatre of the Park of Rest and Culture, or when the *duchniki* form a party to go to the Bolshoi Theatre to hear an old Ukrainian opera being performed as part of the festival of Ukrainian art.

"I went to the Green Theatre straight from the *tekhnikum* with a group of about twenty others", Natasha said. "It was Midsummer's Eve, almost a 'white night', with the tall trees pressing round the huge auditorium seeming to glow with light stored up during the day. Most of the audience had come straight to the theatre from the factories. I heard one man telling his wife he felt a bit worried that he hadn't had a chance to change. She laughed and said: '*As if Alexei Maximovich* would have minded!*' At the back of the stage there was a huge portrait of Gorky, and at each side big panels with his words on them calling on people to advance farther and higher in their search for happiness. Simonov, Polevoy, Kassil, Dovzhenko, Shchipachev, Korneichuk, Vanda Vasilevskaya, and others that I didn't recognise were in the presidium. There were several speeches, not too long, most of them quite interesting. Somebody spoke of how Gorky was appreciated abroad. I didn't agree with him. I don't believe anybody outside the Soviet Union can really appreciate Gorky fully. He was a prophet, and you have to be able to see how his prophecies have come true to understand his message. Then for the rest of the evening the best actors from the Vakhtangov and Yermilov and Mos-Soviet theatres did scenes from Gorky's plays. A young actress recited *Death and the Maiden*, Giatsintova did a scene from *Mother*, and there was a wonderful dramatic version of the story *Chelkash*. You know, I had the feeling that everybody there—there must have been about 16,000—knew the next lines as well as they know what's coming when they hear *Chaikovsky* symphonies played. There were four of us wanting to get to the station, and it was late, so we took a taxi. The driver seemed unusually silent. Then suddenly, apropos of nothing, he said: '*Gorky was right: life is a struggle.*' And he drove on without a word more. I suppose he had been at the meeting too."

I was struck by this seventeen-year-old girl's familiarity with so many present-day Soviet writers—not only with their works but with their personali-

* Gorky.

ties. Yet this is quite natural in a society where the writer plays an important part in public life. Simonov is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; Boris Polevoy frequently represents his country at congresses abroad; Korneichuk—for a time a Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs—is prominent in Ukrainian public life, and very many people remember his wife Vanda Vasilevskaya as much for her passionate speeches at peace conferences as for her books; Lev Kassil, as well as being a much-loved writer for children, takes part in many activities connected with youth movements. It was as active participants in many public associations that Natasha recognised these writers. In no small degree her respect for Soviet literature is formed by her knowledge that the writer is linked with the people, articulating their desire for peace and a rich and dignified way of life.

One form this link takes is that of letters exchanged between author and reader. Boris Polevoy once described to me the enormous help he obtained from such letters. After his *Story of a Real Man* and *We are Soviet People* were published, he received up to fifteen letters a day, not a few of which pointed out mistakes or suggested improvements. Lieutenant-General A. A. Ignatiev, whose memoirs (published in part in Britain as *A Subaltern in Old Russia*) have recently been completed, constantly receives letters from readers who have something to add to his vivid description of almost sixty years of Russian and Soviet life.

Sometimes these letters testify to the changes that have been wrought in life in this country more effectively than any author can succeed in doing. When General Ignatiev joined our company one evening in June, he read us a letter he had just received from a correspondent in the town of Ulan-Ude, capital of the Buryat-Mongols.

“I have re-read your memoirs”, the letter ran. “Not for one moment during the reading did I cease to rage with indignation against the state of affairs in Tsarist Russia. I could hardly put your book down.

“In your second volume you describe how the French saw aeroplanes lying in the snow at Archangel. During the years 1916 to 1917 I worked in the port at Archangel as a labourer. We were unloading military cargoes and storing them in the open. Enormous stocks of war material were lying motionless, waiting for transport. There were not enough trains to take ammunition to the front. At Bakarila station, where there was a huge ammunition dump, a series of explosions started that lasted a week. The port ceased to exist and many ships were sunk.

“We were transferred to another port between the White Sea and Archangel, highly inconvenient, a long way from the railway. We had to lay a branch line across the marshes to the right bank of the Northern Dvina, and then for two kilometres across the ice. But though we worked with the greatest intensity in the port, unloading munitions, the railway was quite inadequate to shift the stores. In January 1917 this new port went up in the air. A lot of ships were sunk. That was the end of the second port.

“I volunteered to fight the fire, and it was while we were sorting out the debris that I saw some huge cases containing aeroplanes, some intact, others damaged. They lay in the snow, exposed to the elements, half covered by the rubble thrown up by the explosion. They were beyond use.

“How many cargoes assembled by you with such speed never reached the front—or if they did, with what great delay! Oh Russia! Oh Tsarism! All this comes back to me on reading your book. At that time, of course, I was not to know that in Paris a certain military representative of Russia, called Colonel Ignatiev, was doing his best to get the maximum amount of munitions shipped to the front. How deep in the past those Tsarist times seem now! What a tremendous distance we have advanced in thirty-four

years ! I look back on those days in astonishment and ask myself : ‘Can all that have really happened ?’

“Your writings have time and time again made me reflect on the past and relive those days in what now seem to have been the Middle Ages, and to appreciate all the more the way we have advanced from Tsarism, from capitalism to socialism. In those days I was only eighteen and understood nothing at all.

“Permit me to add a few lines about myself. It is a Buryat that is writing to you. Before the Revolution I was an illiterate Ulus lad. In 1916 I was requisitioned for dock labour. Yes, yes : requisitioned. And I should have remained an illiterate Ulus *muzhik* had there been no October. I was born and brought up on the banks of the Angara, two hundred kilometres from Irkutsk. Now I work as the senior scientific assistant in our Republic’s regional museum. Last year I was in Irkutsk, and I made a special point of looking at the White House. I said to myself : ‘Here there used to play a little gentleman, the son of the Governor General, who is now our Soviet General.’

“That house now contains the State scientific library. Irkutsk is no longer the place you knew. When you have time, come and see it for yourself. I am proud of it, for in my time, too, during the days of the Revolution, I belonged to Irkutsk.

“This, then, is one of your readers. Wishing you health and still many more years with us in the fullness of creative work. Respectfully yours, *Fm. Shulunov.*”

When the Soviet general who was once a Russian count finished reading this letter from the scientific worker who was once a docker, child of a semi-nomadic Mongolian tribe, Rogov the steelworker said : “Yes, it’s right that we should sometimes turn our minds back to those days. That’s why I wanted Lyuba to see *The Breaking-Point.*”

The Breaking-Point is a play by Boris Lavrenev, which the Art Theatre revived last season. It belongs to that category of plays—others in it are Vishnievsky’s *Unforgettable 1919* and *The Optimistic Tragedy*—that take the early years of the Revolution as their subject matter. Shulunov’s letter may serve to illustrate the point that there is an insatiable thirst for literature illuminating the past, particularly the history of the October Revolution and the events leading up to and following it. Allied to this is the taste for works that reconstruct the lives of great men. Several of the young people of Obiralovka have seen the biographical play *Griboyedov*, on the author-diplomat who wrote *Wit Works Woe*. The play begins at the stage of Griboyedov’s life when he is serving as a Russian diplomatic agent with General Yermolov, Governor of Trans-Caucasia. News of the execution of the Decembrists reaches him, but though his attitude towards the oppressed peoples of Trans-Caucasia is enlightened, Griboyedov condemns the Petersburg conspirators for their foolhardiness. Nevertheless, he is suspect in the court’s eyes, and Yermolov is ordered to arrest him. Cleared of suspicion, he is appointed Russian envoy to Persia, with instructions to appease the Shah and the British, who have their own plans for Persia. We follow him on his long journey, during which he returns to Tiflis to marry the young daughter of Alexander Chavchavadze, first of the Georgian romantic poets. With his bride, Nina, Griboyedov continues his journey to Persia, where in the course of his duties he is assassinated when challenging the Shah’s right to detain a Moslem slave abducted from Trans-Caucasia. In the play the guilt for the assassination is laid on a British agent. This play, written by Sergei Yermolinsky and produced at the Stanislavsky Theatre, was too slow-moving to suit most of our young people, who—with most of their generation—like exciting, rapid action, or failing that full-blooded emotional drama.

I have seen young workers start from their seats in an impulse to intervene during Othello's scenes of misunderstanding with Desdemona. At the same time, Moscow audiences do not hesitate to express their disapproval if the drama falls short of their expectations. During a recent performance of a disappointing play by Piriev, *The Lutonin Family*, at the Maly Theatre, I heard a voice raised from the back of the stalls saying: "*Talk to him, it's your last chance!*" This occurred during a scene when the unfaithful husband confesses to his wife; instead of developing the situation, the author throws away the dramatic moment by having the woman say meekly: "*Please put the lights out—I'd rather not look at you.*" The audience thought this about as mean a finish as when an outside-right puts the ball into touch instead of centring, and they expressed their disapproval as promptly as a football crowd.

A play that combines painstakingly accurate reconstruction of the past with exciting drama is *From the Spark*, a dramatisation by the Georgian writer Shalva Diadani of J. V. Stalin's revolutionary activities in Batum fifty years ago. I had seen this play previously in Tbilisi, acted in Georgian, and it was as a result of my description of it that a small party set out one Sunday morning from the village to attend a matinee at the Pushkin Theatre. This is the new company that has replaced the late Alexander Tairov's Kamerny Theatre. The sudden death of its actor-manager V. V. Vanin was a serious blow to the Soviet stage. The production of a play in which much depends on the success with which fine distinctions are drawn between habits of speech and behaviour in Georgian, Armenian and Jewish people working in capitalist conditions is obviously no easy task for a Russian company. There is also the well-nigh insuperable task of portraying Lenin and Stalin in a convincing way, and of giving plausibility to characters—such as Zykov the factory-owner and Karlo Chkhaidze the Menshevik—that have long passed out of observation in Soviet life. However, the play appears to have won a place in the theatre's repertoire.

No play has aroused so much discussion in our circle as Anatoly Surov's *Dawn Over Moscow*, which has been running in two Moscow theatres simultaneously. "That's the kind of play I like", said Yermilov, who has not found much to please him in the theatre lately. "When I saw it, I remembered a cloth mill I visited last year during the election campaign. There was a notice saying *Raising Quality Is Now Our First Concern*; and when I commented on it, one of the girls repeated to me what Stalin told textile-workers recently: '*Dress our Soviet women like princesses; let them be admired by the whole world*'."

The curtain rises, in *Dawn Over Moscow*, on a living-room in an old house in that part of Moscow that lies just across the river from the Kremlin, a district where more than anywhere else one can still recapture something of the atmosphere of pre-revolutionary days. Agrippina Solntseva, an old but still agile pensioner, is playing cards with Anton Petrovich, burly fur-trapper from Siberia. It is long past midnight, and they are both waiting for Agrippina's daughter Kapitolina, director of the Moskvich textile mills, for whom Anton nurses an unrequited love. They are interrupted by the third generation of the Solntsev family, Sanya, who bursts in with a group of classmates who have been celebrating the end of their schooldays with the traditional walk in Red Square.

Dawn is breaking over Moscow. Through the windows Anton watches the sky growing light behind the star-topped spires of the Kremlin. The red flag above the Cabinet offices is stirred by the morning breeze. "*Who has Moscow grown so beautiful for?*" he asks rhetorically. "*For our grandchildren? And for us too, I believe. That's what Kapitolina doesn't understand. She has taken to putting off happiness till the day after tomorrow. But I say it's high time we lived happily now.*"

Kapitolina appears, an imposing, energetic woman, dressed with masculine severity. With her comes Kurepin, the Party organiser at the factory, a tall, sturdily built man with a calm manner and a ready smile. Kapitolina cannot understand how a communist organiser can be always smiling. She herself is brusque with her mother and her daughter. She has no time for family life. She spurns the fur-trapper's affection. Even at this late hour she talks shop with Kurepin.

On the face of things the Moskvich mills are doing excellently. The cloth output, reckoned in quantity, is twenty per cent above plan. Kapitolina—whose family has been connected with this factory ever since it was founded in the nineteenth century—feels that she is worthily fulfilling the trust placed in her. But Kurepin says: “*The workers at our factory are not satisfied with the cloth they are producing; they want to print cloth with more colours and prettier designs.*” Kapitolina laughs him down, saying that the time is not ripe for beauty. “*And when do you expect it to ripen?*” retorts Kurepin. “*Do you think everybody should be wearing military tunics and Cossack cloaks, sacrificing sleep and food and happiness? The people look on things very differently. Guns are guns, they say, and that has to be remembered, but it's high time we were building a new life.*”

This conflict between the manager and the Party organiser is sustained throughout the play, but—as the latter remarks—it is an unusual kind of conflict. She is fighting *against* him, but he is fighting *for* her. He recognises her outstanding qualities as a conscientious director, he knows she is heart and soul in love with her work and enjoys great authority among the workers, even if she lacks sympathy for some of them—including her own daughter, who has joined the design department and is among those dissatisfied with the quality of production. But he is quietly determined to break down her conservatism and to bring her into line with the requirements of Soviet society.

In this he has an ally in the Vice-Minister for Light Industry, Stepanyan. Kapitolina is summoned to the Ministry. She is at a loss to understand what grounds there can be for complaint against her. For thirty-three years—she says—she has worked honestly and been praised for it. Now she finds herself under criticism all of a sudden. Stepanyan comes to the point. Rising from his desk, he draws aside a curtain and reveals a collection of drab and unattractive dresses, all of them work—he comments pointedly—of people who insist they are working honestly and have fulfilled their plans. Then he exhibits another collection, this time of gay multi-coloured cloths. “*What an achievement is yours, Solntseva! To clothe with the output of your mills 120,000 people a day! To make 120,000 people ugly in a single day!*”

Kapitolina learns her lesson and takes a new path that leads her to reunion with her mother and her daughter, and to the arms of her Siberian admirer. As in most Soviet plays today, the main theme is the individual's relation to a society consciously changing itself, with a secondary theme concerned with family relations. In Sergei Mikhalkhov's *The Lost Home*, an unsuccessful work somewhat unworthy of the Art Theatre, the question posed is the extent to which a woman should devote herself to attending to the needs of her husband and children. The central figures are the erring middle-aged husband (an engineer), his wife (a surgeon), and the young woman who is the cause of the breakdown in the family. The engineer is an egoist equally indifferent to the demands made on him by his more enthusiastic colleagues for his support to plans to carry through a gigantic river-diversion scheme in Siberia (a thinly veiled reference to the Davydov project of turning the waters of the Ob to flow

up the Tobol valley across the Kirghiz steppe and into the Aral Sea) and to the happiness of the young woman who is so infatuated with him that she neglects her work after receiving her diploma. The abandoned wife, on the other hand, though deeply hurt, finds solace in her work and argues with sympathetic friends that this just goes to prove that a wife should not be wholly wrapped up in family life.

The Obiralovka verdict, after hearing the play broadcast, was unanimously unfavourable. "*Too moralistic*", said Fomin. "*I like a play about principles like COURT OF HONOUR, but I can't stand it when these writers preach little sermons about family life. Much too shallow, as a rule.*"

He likes a heavy play, a four-acter lasting from eight till nearly midnight. There are many like him in Moscow, as was shown by the attendant at a theatre ticket-office who recommended a particular play with the comment: "*Very, very heavy; most enjoyable.*"

This inclination towards solid fare shows itself in our company's reading habits. Two years after publication, Azhayev's *Far From Moscow* retains its great popularity. It is a long time since a Soviet novel has appealed to so widely varied a public, a quality that is perhaps accounted for by the great range of characters described. Readers of the English edition might care to draw a comparison between the list of personages in the Soviet best-seller and in, say, J. B. Priestley's popular *Festival at Fairbridge*. This might help them to understand the kind of world into which Soviet readers are drawn by literature—a world peopled by restless pioneers, straightforward, rather puritanical young Russian men and women, brilliant, quick-tempered Georgians, lonely fishermen dwelling on the edges of great rivers utterly immobile for most of the year, round-faced, genial Nanai folk, all working feverishly together in a setting of extraordinary grandeur.

Perhaps it is the breadth of this book that accounts for its success outside the Soviet Union. When I visited construction sites in Hungary and Rumania recently, I was always meeting people who referred to themselves by names from Azhayev's novel. "*I am what you might call the Batmanov of Dunapentele*", said the general director of the biggest Hungarian building project. He was referring to his counterpart on the pipe-line construction job described in *Far From Moscow*.

Several of our company at Obiralovka are likely to take part in some great construction job before long; others have worked at Stalingrad, on the Moscow Canal, in the Kuzbas. Hence their warm response to Azhayev's description of the hardships and the triumphs, the hesitations and the audaciousness that accompanied the construction. They are ready for it, they remember it.

Have I said enough to persuade you that culture is everybody's business at Obiralovka, that all of us in the Hammer and Sickle *dacha* settlement are intellectuals in the sense that no one there, student or worker, turns his back on literature or poetry or straight theatre and says "*This is not for me*"? Perhaps this is why almost all forms Soviet culture takes are under so heavy a bombardment of criticism just now. There was not a great deal of praise being handed out to present-day writers in our *dacha* garden this summer. Most seemed to think that the good, established writers could do better than they are doing; they are constantly being measured against the great writers of the past, much to their disadvantage. There is a feeling among manual workers that the writers, scenarists and composers are not scoring the same successes as are being achieved in the factories, and because the Soviet artist is sensitive to the voice of the masses it is perhaps just this tinge of reproach that will act as the spur to more profound and more conscientious work.

OVER-PLAN PROFITS IN A SOVIET FACTORY

By V. Nikolayev

A large meeting took place recently in one of the departments of the KUIBYSHEV BALL-BEARING PLANT. The workers, technicians and clerical staff listened attentively to a speech by V. Nikolayev, chief accountant at the works, on: What happens to the profit¹ produced by this factory in excess of its planned quota. Stakhanovites, skilled craftsmen, engineers and trade union workers took part in the ensuing discussion. The following is a condensation of Nikolayev's speech.

COMRADES, this works has been showing a profit for a long time now. Every year we over-fulfil our obligations under the State plan. Every additional rouble of profit that our workers turn out helps the whole community in its task of building communist society.

Our workers have been steadily increasing productivity of their labour in recent years. This has allowed us to effect a considerable saving in production costs and thus to increase our over-plan profits. We accumulated more than eighteen million roubles in excess of the plan in nine months of 1950 alone.

IN A socialist state, where there is not and cannot be any exploitation of man by man, the utilisation of profits is not a secret. Every worker knows how the profits he produces are used. This is in complete contrast to the situation in capitalist countries. "Capitalists", observed Lenin, "do not like to reveal the true state of their income. 'Commercial secrecy' is strictly guarded, and it is very difficult for the uninitiated to penetrate the 'secrets' of the accumulation of wealth. Private property is sacred: no one may meddle in the affairs of the property owner. Such are the tenets of capitalism."

The income derived from our industries does not go to enrich private individuals, but is used in the further development of industry, in improving the material and cultural level of the working class, and in lowering the prices of industrial goods that are essential both to peasants and workers; that is, in improving the living standards of all who work.

Under capitalism "profit increases in the same measure as payment for work done decreases", observed Karl Marx. It is not difficult to trace the working of this law in any modern capitalist state.

In our country profit is used to develop industry, to reconstruct existing enterprises and construct new ones. It is also used to reduce the prices of industrial and consumer goods, to improve the living standards of the workers, and to finance social insurance. Finally, it is used for cultural purposes, for technical training in the factories and workshops, for workers' holidays and for wage increases.

What principles govern the expenditure of the wealth amassed by the unselfish labour of the workers, technicians and administrative staff in our stakhanovite factory?

A proportion of the profit goes to the State Budget, for use in socialist construction, in the realisation of the splendid projects of the post-war Five Year Plan. A part of this wealth was assigned to our own enterprise: with it we have put up a new workshop and extended our plant.

A further proportion is paid into the factory account, to be used for the needs of the workers as a whole. In the course of nine months the Director's Fund² has received more than two million roubles from profit. We have received nearly two and a half million roubles as prizes in all-Union socialist emulation contests.

How have we used these resources?

Last year, with the aid of these funds, we began putting up new dwelling houses and cultural establishments and improving the condition and appearance of the factory area. You all know the great changes that have taken place within the factory itself.

In the past nine months we have laid out nearly two and a half million roubles on the construction of dwelling houses alone. Many of our workers and administrative staff have recently celebrated their occupancy of new and well-built apartments. Four houses are still under construction.

Voice from the hall: More than that were planned, I think.

Yes, comrade. The Government has allotted us six and a half million roubles for housing; but we are using this allocation slowly.

Voice from the hall: Why are we building houses slowly?

Because our building trust, *Podshipnikstroï*, under comrade Drozhin, has not carried out its agreement.

Our five workers' hostels may with every justification be called "cultured". More than 300,000 roubles has been spent on supplementary furnishing this year. We have purchased more than 300 beds with spring mattresses, several dozen bookcases, 145 mirrors, and large quantities of bedding, pictures, curtains and household utensils.

The factory has a large building fund. The State allots us considerable sums annually for repairs. More than 300,000 roubles has been spent on repairing eighty workers' flats alone.

Gas has been laid on to the apartments of many of our workers and administrative staff. On this 290,000 roubles has been spent. On the strictest calculation, this has saved our workers more than 150,000 roubles. The factory's Open Spaces and Amenities Department has laid down 6,000 square metres of asphalt road and in the spring and autumn planted some 1,200 trees and shrubs. Special machines for cleaning the factory area have been bought.

The factory rest home is the pride of all our workers. It is rightly considered one of the best on the Volga. It has recently been repaired throughout and has received additional equipment. In nine months 1,641 people have stayed there. Seventy of these went free of charge and the rest at a considerable reduction. 750,000 roubles was spent on equipping the rest home in 1949, and in 1950 a further 3,500.

Voice from the hall: How many workers and administrative staff went to holiday resorts?

I was just going to tell you. Our workers and administrative staff do not spend their holidays at our own rest home only. Last summer 263 people stayed at rest homes in the Crimea and on the Black Sea coast. Fifty-one of these paid nothing. We spent hundreds of thousands of roubles on reservations.

The factory collective lavishes every care on our future—the children. They had enjoyable holidays in the summer months. Nearly 800 school-children went to the factory's pioneer camp; about 200 of these paid nothing, and the rest a trifling sum, defrayed by their parents. The children in the children's institution spent the whole summer at a country house. More than 200,000 roubles was spent on children's summer holidays.

We do not forget the children whose fathers died fighting for their country in the Patriotic War. A special children's home has been built for them. Seventy-five boys and girls are being brought up there. Care for the children of our war dead is a patriotic duty. They are well clothed and cared for and do well at their lessons. During the last nine months, 100,000 roubles has been spent on the upkeep of the children's home.

We have recently completed the construction of a large seven-year school for the factory. Several hundred pupils are already attending it.

The factory club has been repaired and its work has improved recently. One may attend lectures on political and scientific subjects and take part in the activities of the various art groups. The performances of the factory choir and the folk-music orchestra, and the productions of the drama circle, have all been highly successful. The club itself has been made so comfortable and attractive that it is a pleasure to go into it.

In nine months, more than 250,000 roubles has been spent on equipping the club. This money has gone on musical instruments, theatrical costumes, furniture, chandeliers, pictures and carpets. But owing to its size our club can no longer satisfy our workers.

Voice from the hall: Quite right. Time we built a new club.

Comrades, there is every reason to suppose that our stakhanovite factory will produce an even greater profit in 1951. Then we shall be able to build a new and much bigger club. We estimate it will cost two million roubles to put up.

The demand for books increases every day. We once had only eight thousand books in our library, and that satisfied us; now we have more than twenty-three thousand, and they are not enough. We are constantly increasing our stock of books. In the last nine months alone more than five thousand new books have appeared on our shelves. Considerable sums have been spent on enlarging and furnishing the reading-room.

There are many graduates from industrial and factory schools working in our plant. The young men and women want to take part in sports and physical culture, and the factory organisations are meeting this wish. A water-sports station on the Volga has been financed from the Director's Fund. This was already in use this summer. *Torpedo*, the factory sports organisation, has formed rowing and sailing clubs. The first ice-yachting club in the town is now being formed.

Our physical culture group has its own ice-sports station and rink. A new ice-sports station is shortly to be constructed on the Volga. A large new rink will be specially constructed for figure-skating enthusiasts. More than 100,000 roubles has been spent on the sports society.

I am not able to detail all the ways in which our profit has been spent recently. You have all seen, for example, the foundry that has been added to the machine repair shop. This has greatly facilitated the work of the shop. A drying-room has been built in the tare shop, and we shall shortly be starting the construction of a powerful refrigerator in the factory canteen. We have acquired "drawing combines" which speed up and facilitate the work of our designers and draughtsmen. A cosy new club has been opened in the Frunze workers' settlement.

RECENTLY, comrades, there occurred a great and joyful event in our plant's glorious history: we had the honour to be awarded the title of "Stakhanovite Enterprise".

Our finest workers, whose achievements are well known, have been trained in our struggle to become a stakhanovite enterprise. The names of that notable craftsman Pyotr Bobrik and Alexei Sukhinin, the blacksmith innovator, are widely known, as are also those of the stakhanovites Vassili Krivosheyev, Raisa Kondukturova, Polina Mikhayeva and hundreds of others. The number of stakhanovites has increased by more than two thousand in the past year.

The active participation of the whole concern in socialist emulation, and the increase in the number of stakhanovites, has enabled us to increase the productivity of labour by 22% and lower production costs by 30.8%.

Honest and conscientious work for the good of the country is encouraged by bonuses as well as by larger pay-packets. More than 1,800,000 roubles has been paid out in bonuses to leading workers, technicians and administrative staff.

Hundreds of workers in the factory have received cars, motor-cycles, bicycles, radio sets, sewing machines, valuable pictures, carpets, and furniture, as rewards in socialist emulation contests.

That, comrades, is how the profit produced by the factory in excess of the planned quota is spent. The figures show conclusively that the better every one of us works, the more profit our enterprise will produce and the more wealth will be available to develop our native land and to raise the living standards of the population.

Abridged from TRUD, January 9, 1951

NOTES

1. "Profit": Factory quotas are assessed in the State plan on a unit and cost basis. Thus it is possible for a factory to over-fulfil its production, but fail to produce a profit because its production costs per unit are too high.
2. "Director's fund": The "director's fund" in a Soviet factory is composed of (a) a share of the *planned* profits of the factory, ranging from 2 per cent in the light industries to 10 per cent in heavy trades; (b) a larger share—from 25 per cent to 75 per cent—of all profits produced *in excess of plan*. Half of the fund is used for bonuses and welfare, half as working resources to expand production and extra house-building.
3. "Cultured": The Russian words *kultura* and *kulturny* have a far wider connotation than their English counterparts *culture*, *cultural* and *cultured*. The Russian use embraces, in addition to a cultivated mind and a sense of civic responsibility, all the material aids to civilised living.

THE ARTIST AND THE COLOUR-FILM

By M. Bogdanov and G. Myasnikov

SOVIET colour films have won universal recognition in our country and from foreign audiences at international film festivals. They really are the best in the world. Our cinematography has taken to colour, not as an attraction to stun the audience, but as a means of artistic and picturesque expression of the idea-content of the production.

From the very beginning, Soviet colour films, whose colour-composition has been dictated by a creative and purposeful attitude towards life and man, towards the idea-content of the events depicted, have shown the immeasurable superiority of the art of socialist realism as compared with the formalist zig-zagging and trite naturalism of bourgeois colour-films.

Soviet colour cinematography did not take long to reach creative maturity and technical perfection. This year, out of twenty-six films made, nineteen will be in colour, and within a few years all our film studios may be expected to produce nothing but colour films.

Are we not, in the interests of a further creative development of colour cinematography, bound to make an analysis of the reasons for individual failures? This is plainly essential.

The Conspiracy of the Doomed is a noteworthy film deserving a highly appreciative audience. In this film's colour-composition, however, clever improvisation prevails over the purpose—improvisation in the composition of individual sets or episodes, without taking into account their significance in the achievement of the aim. For example, the pictorial composition of the public prayer "for the sending down of rain" is more beautiful and impressive than the unveiling of the memorial to the Soviet warriors.

It is very obvious that such faults in the colour-composition of this fine film result from encroachment by the cameraman, who relied solely on his own personal taste (not, in our view, devoid of aestheticism) and ignored the talented artist I. Shpinel. The cameraman concentrated all his craftsmanship on the composition of scenes showing the action of negative heroes, while the colour-composition of episodes showing positive heroes was tamely done. The initiative of the artist, we are convinced, was shackled, it did not find the needed application, and this caused inadequacy in the film's colour-composition and consequently impaired also the quality of the production as a work of art, in which one of the basic elements of its emotional influence is colour.

This is no accident. The point is that many cinematographers have not yet rid themselves of their mistaken views as to the significance of the artist in the creation of a film, views typical of the era of black-and-white films. They have hitherto regarded the work of the artist in cinema not as a creative process but as rule-of-thumb performance of a job of work on some set or other. For many years now it has been made apparent that the authorship of the pictorial style of a film pertains wholly to the cameraman. It suffices to look through the published works of cameraman A. Golovin to confirm this. The students of the VGIK* cameramen's college—and that is not the only one—are taught that the colour-composition of a film rests solely with the cameraman.

Is this a fact? Working practice on colour films has shown that this point of view is wrong and outworn and is hampering the creative development of

* VGIK = All-Union State Institute of Cinematography.

colour cinematography and putting the brake on its progress. This is made clearer than ever in, for example, the film *Zhukovsky*, whose chief cameraman was Golovin.

Rich in idea-content, outstanding in skill of discretion and of acting, the film *Zhukovsky* was made at a time when our colour cinematography had already accumulated considerable creative and technical experience. Why then can its pictorial quality not be considered fully satisfactory? It is very easy to explain this.

In this production, the artists expressed the cameraman's concept. Genuine art cannot tolerate dilettantism, nor can it tolerate a rule-of-thumb attitude towards the interpretation of material. Therefore in a colour film the artist and no one else must, in creative co-operation with cameraman and director, work out and determine the colouring, aiming at unity between form and content. The dilettantish concept of the cameraman, and the rule-of-thumb way the artists A. Weissfeld and A. Goncharov carried it out, caused a wrong method of work on the *Zhukovsky* film in the preparatory stage. Weissfeld collected authentic photographs, and having copied them elaborately he "coloured them up" (as he himself aptly put it). The other artist, Goncharov, having repeated the outlines of the sketches and having got down on paper the contours of walls, hangings, tables, chairs and so forth, painted them in conventional colours, taking into account neither the idea-content, the conception and significance of the episodes the sets were being made for, nor the influence of lighting.

Thus the seed of a wrong colour-construction for the whole film production was sown in the preparatory phase. Not even the cameraman, who considered himself an artist in colour, was able to set this right. And it became apparent that the decor in this film did not help to bring fully before the audience the great hero so magnificently created by the actor.

One of the most important colour scenes in this film is set in *Zhukovsky's* flat. Here the most significant of the dramatic events are enacted. How uncomfortable, cold, unlivable in this flat appears on the screen! You feel sorry for the great scientist. The set has a great many everyday details, "colour-tone," "lighting-notes" and so forth, but these form no living unity with the film's hero, and appear on the screen as lifeless illustrations.

We remember the scene where *Zhukovsky* comes home wildly excited and tells his pupils of the Soviet Government's decision to set up the TsAGI* : and here there is no change at all in the "*Zhukovsky's* flat" set. Bright, radiant, beaming sunshine would have suited the point of this event and the feelings of the characters ; but there was not the slightest variation in the background set—it remained just as it had been, a lifeless setting, abstract and divorced from the dramatic action.

We have no intention of minimising in the slightest degree the creative importance of the cameraman, who directly embodies in celluloid the whole artistic conception of the film's creators ; but the development of our colour cinematography has now reached a level where the role of the artist in the creation of a film is substantially increasing. It is time we spoke out about this.

Since the introduction of colour into the cinema, the demand for pictorial quality in films has immeasurably increased. There has arisen the entirely new task of creating a colour-unity in the pictures and the composition of the film, resembling in general, let us say, a painted canvas showing unity in action and in time. Such a task cannot be carried out without active creative participation by the artist.

Every cinema production is the result of joint creative efforts by the workers in different fields of art, headed and drawn together by the director-

* TsAGI=Central Aero-Dynamics Institute.

producer. Obviously the artist cannot, without full creative contact with director and cameraman (a contact ensuring unity in style, a single inner grasp of the theme and its pictorial expression), exert a fruitful active influence on the pictorial and colour structure of the film.

Can such contact be achieved in practice? Undoubtedly it can! It is proved by the actual creation of several colour films, which have been markedly successful, thanks to the creative co-operation between director, cameraman and artist in the preparatory period. This is emphasised particularly by the experience of the producing-collective of the film *The Stone Flower*. The director, the cameraman and the artist between them settled that the film's spatial decor and colour composition were to fit in with the basic dramatic tasks set by the scenario. The artists were given the fullest opportunity for creative initiative. Everybody—director, cameraman and artists—settled the pictorial and colour structure of the film as a whole together, so that it should accord with the author's concept expressed in the scenario. When it was clear that the premises of the film's creator were understood and the theme and its working-out felt, a minute study of the material was begun. Part of the filming group, among whom were artists, left for the Urals to acquaint themselves with the architecture, landscape, costume tools and utensils, local craftsmen's wares, natural resources.

Only after this did we set to work on preliminary sketches, in which the painters' gifts settled the general colour-composition of the film, defining the rhythm of the "colour-flow" logically evolving in conformity with the development of the subject. It is thanks to this that the colour composition of the various episodes was harmoniously co-ordinated and subordinated, and flowed organically from the general colour structure of the film, and chance in the colour composition of the various episodes was excluded.

Side by side with the "colour framework," as a colour reinforcement of the scenario, we put in a graphic treatment of decorative objects. The general sketch for each set was itself the result of work carried out at an earlier stage by the director, the cameraman and the artists in working out the pictorial style of the coming film.

Thus, in making *The Stone Flower*, fruitful co-operation between director, cameraman and artists was achieved. This in our view is the way to tackle the creative tasks of colour cinematography properly. And does not *The Fall of Berlin* also bear witness to this?

While the various sets and backgrounds for this latter film were still being sketched out, it became apparent that the artists' group, by close co-operation with the director, Chiaureli, and by learning from experience with the preliminary colours for the pictures and thereby enriching their creative faculties, had in the preparatory phase ensured the success of the colour filming. Neither Chiaureli nor the cameraman, L. Kosmatov, in any way hindered the artists' creative initiative, but rather helped and encouraged it.

Of course, many episodes in the film are not precisely as set down in the draft, and many came to birth during the filming; but the draft did enable the producer, the cameraman and the artists to see the pictorial design of the film as a whole. Hence, changes were introduced not by chance but in accordance with the creator's artistic concept.

While working on *Michurin*, *Brave People*, and *Przhevalsky* we similarly saw our task to be that of finding a colour unity in the exterior and interior shots.

Such colour composition cannot, of course, be achieved without creative co-operation with the cameraman, nor can they be fully embodied on the screen without the artist. Proper pictorial film compositions, including coloured ones,

must be defined right from the preparatory phase. The artists, in creative co-operation with director and cameraman, must create their own colour range for the scenario of the forthcoming film.

Some cinematic workers are alarmed by the words "colour framework" and "pictorial scenarios". They see in them an encroachment on the creative prerogative of some branch or other of film making. These are vain fears. The "colour framework", the working-out of a "pictorial scenario", in no way hinder the creativeness of producer or cameraman: they help them, as does work in every constructive group, to raise the pictorial composition of the colour film to a greater height.

Our colour cinematography is perfecting itself on the basis of the socialist-realist method, developing the best progressive traditions of Russian realistic art, the art of all the fraternal peoples of the USSR. Repin once wrote to Kramskoi: "The face, the soul of man, the drama of life, the impressions of nature, its life, and the very spirit of history, these are our themes, in my opinion. Colours are our instrument, they must express our minds. Our colouring is not some refined dabbling, it must express to us the mood of the picture, its soul, it must strike and seize upon every beholder like a chord in music."

In their effort to produce films that are even better, richer in content, and of higher artistic value, our cinematic workers must learn to make free use of the resources of pictorial composition, remembering that colours are an instrument to express the mind.

To raise the pictorial quality of colour films, to avoid chance makeshift compositions out of line with the dramatic concept, to strengthen the emotional influence of colour, the artist must be enabled to become precisely an artist co-author of the film

From *SOV. ISKUSSTVO*, 10.3.51.

HOW A CITY SOVIET DRAWS UP AND FULFILS ITS PLAN

THE first session of the newly elected City Soviet of Syzran (Kuibyshev Region), held on December 22, 1950, elected the Executive Committee of the Soviet, set up nine permanent commissions—Trade, Local Industry, Culture and Education, Municipal Economy and Amenities, Health, and others—and confirmed the appointments of departmental heads. After the session the executive committees of the City Soviet and of the three ward Soviets (Industrial, Central and October Wards), and the permanent commissions, drew up their plans. These are based on the main directives indicated by the Government and the Party, the city's economic plan, and the instructions of the electors.

In drawing up their plan for the February-April period towards the end of January, the leaders of the E.C. turned for advice in the first instance to the permanent commissions, the deputies, the street committees and the Soviet activists. At all meetings which discussed the draft plan, it was not only polished up but enriched with new and important problems. This was assisted by a good tradition at Syzran: the first Friday in the month is Soviet Day.

On Friday, February 2, seven of the nine permanent commissions had their sessions. At the Municipal Economy Commission, in addition to the eight deputies constituting it, there were thirty-two activists: house managers, chairmen of street committees, representatives of city and ward housing departments, municipal employees. At the Health Commission there were nine deputies and fifty-four activists (doctors and teachers). At the Local Industry Commission there were twenty-five activists. In all, over two hundred deputies and activists attended that day. (Out of the 284 deputies, one-third are members of the permanent commissions; the rest play an important part in preliminary investigation of important questions like extension of personal service shops, fuel supplies for the 1951-52 season, summer holiday facilities, and so on.)

Each permanent commission discussed questions arising out of its own plan; but in addition it made suggestions for the city executive's plan.

Thus the Municipal Economy Commission discussed town amenities that day: about thirty million roubles are to be spent this year on these and on housing. It will be necessary, if all the plans are to be fulfilled, to attract the people themselves to such jobs as tree-planting, laying down new water-mains, paving streets and highways. Deputy A. S. Kuznetsov suggested that the E.C. should discuss the most effective ways of doing this. House-manager I. O. Nesmelova advised a discussion on extending the practice of "Socialist upkeep of houses" (the tenants undertaking a public obligation to maintain them in good order): several instructions from the electors, she pointed out, had put this forward. S. V. Shmonin, the oldest deputy, was worried about repeating last year's delay in the work of the town Building and Repairs Office, Water and Drains Department, and Parks and Open Spaces Committee. Both he and deputy Sidorkin (chief engineer of the town power-station) recommended that the E.C. should hear a report on the subject. Many other proposals put forward at the three-hours' session of the commission were included in the E.C.'s plan.

The main subject at the Local Industry Commission was the use of waste material from the big industrial undertakings for production of consumer goods by locally owned enterprise. The deputies had before the meeting investigated what was happening at ten factories in the city. "At the house fabrication

works as much as 1500 cubic metres of timber are burned or wasted every year," stated deputy N. I. Dmitrievsky. "Stools, chairs and other furniture could be made out of this." At the *Chevrochrome* factory, in dressing the hides, there are about seven tons of wool, over six tons of bristles, and sixty to seventy tons of leather scraps going to waste yearly, said deputy Y. I. Kostitzyn. The E.C. should take up seriously the question of using them in local industries. This was warmly supported by deputy E. I. Matveyeva. "At the Combine Works," she added, "about 1500 tons of scrap sheet iron are thrown out to waste, which could very well be used to make buckets, mugs, funnels, tools for the tractor brigades." Engineers Chernik and Zernov, from the Traction Engine Works and Combine Works, promised technical aid to local industry in using this waste material from the big plants.

This important problem was duly included in the plan of work of the executive committee. Other commissions raised such questions as the repertoire of the city theatre, the organisation of summer leisure facilities, the improvement of the city medical institutions, and so forth.

More proposals were added to the E.C. plan on the initiative of other bodies. Thus at a meeting of the city Party activists, at the end of January, the Chairman of the E.C., Rylov, had reported on the rapidly expanding activities of trading organisations. During the first nine months of 1950, as compared with the same period of 1947, sales of cotton goods had gone up by 443 per cent, silk goods by 263 per cent, sugar by 256 per cent, and so forth. Dozens of cars and motor-cycles and hundreds of bicycles had been bought by citizens for personal use. But many trading organisations were still giving bad service; this applied particularly to the city outskirts like the October Ward, said deputy V. S. Pryadilnikov, an engine-driver. Another deputy, F. P. Sinev, criticised factory directors for not providing shop accommodation—as the Government required—in new houses they were building. Two new sections appeared in the plan of the city Soviet's E.C. as a result of these discussions.

Yet further supplements came from consultations held by deputies living in the factory housing estates. At one such consultation, held in the Industrial Ward, there were present factory directors, heads of building offices, Stakhanovite workers, engineers, party members. In the course of lively discussions, the following additions were proposed: (i) finishing the road connecting the estate with the city centre; (ii) improvement of postal and bus services to the estate; (iii) building a store, a restaurant and a steam bath. Again, at a meeting of street committees in the same Ward, it was resolved to ask the city Soviet to include two more points in its plan: (i) report of the E.C. of the Ward Soviet; (ii) measures for tree-planting and improving open spaces.

The plan was adopted in its final form by the City Executive Committee on February 5, many persons active in the city's affairs attending by invitation. V. N. Gukov, Chairman of the E.C. of the Central Ward Soviet, thought the point about improving personal service establishments particularly important. "We have sixty of them in our Ward," he said, "In the next few days we shall call a conference of their best workers and discuss how to improve the work of hairdressers, tailoring and boot-repair shops, and the public baths." It was decided to hold mass town's meetings to discuss participation in the improvement of amenities, in all the housing estates, factories and offices. An important point was included in the plan for March, on the proposal of A. V. Zubov, Secretary of the City Committee of the Party—discussion of preparations for the first tramline.

"This is an exceptionally important and serious affair for Syzran," said Zubov. "Our city stretches for nearly thirty-seven miles. The Soviet Government has been very attentive to Syzran needs, and has voted funds to prepare the building of the first line in 1951. We must draw in a broad public for the discussion of all the questions involved. The three lines, sixteen miles long, will

cost approximately forty million roubles or thereabouts. The workers themselves suggested what route the first line should take: you know that the deputies corrected us, and we have altered the main part of the route. Now that building is actually under way, we need to discuss every detail carefully and to take the advice of the population.”

MAIN OUTLINES OF THE PLAN (as adopted)

1. Questions to be prepared and discussed at meetings of the Executive Committee of the City Soviet.

Month	Question	Prepared by
March	Extension of personal service shops and improvement of their work.	A group of deputies of the City Soviet.
	Report on the work of the City Trading Department.	Permanent Commission for Trade, and Vice-Chairman of E.C., Morunov.
	Fulfilment of electors' instructions by E.C. departments.	Chairmen of permanent commissions and Secretary of E.C., Prokopyev.
	Report on City Housing Department's work.	Comrade Morunov and the Municipal Economy Department.
April	Measures for building first line of tramway.	Municipal Economy Department.
	Plan of work for improving open spaces.	"Green Construction" Office.
	Report of the E.C. of Industrial Ward Soviet.	Comrade Morunov and a group of deputies.
	Repertoire of the City Drama Theatre and the workers' clubs.	City Department of Culture and Education.
	Measures for raising output of local building materials in State, co-operative and local industry.	City Planning Commission.
	Organisation of workers' leisure activities in the spring and summer of 1951.	City Department of Culture and Education: a group of deputies.
	Extension of Stakhanovite methods of work.	Permanent Commission for Local Industry, and City Planning Commission.
	Development of physical culture and sport in the spring and summer months.	City Committee for Physical Culture and Sport.

2. In accordance with the request of the chairmen of the permanent commissions of the City Soviet, sessions of the permanent commissions will be held on the first Friday of each month.

3. In accordance with Article 8b of the Constitution of the RSFSR, sessions of the City Soviet will be held monthly.

The following questions shall be prepared and introduced by the E.C. at sessions of the City Soviet:

In March: 1. Plan of economic development of the city for 1951.
2. Approval of the City Budget for 1951.

In April: 1. Progress in fulfilment of the plan for housing and cultural building by industrial establishments of the city.
2. Report of the E.C. on progress in fulfilment of instructions from the electors.

4. To rally the workers by hand and brain for the fulfilment of the economic plan, to extend more advanced methods of work, and to give practical help to Soviet personnel in improving their work, the following measures of a mass character to be taken in March and April:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Prepared by</i>
March 1-10	Conference of street committees and public sanitation volunteers on spring campaign for town cleaning and improvements.	<i>E.C.s of Ward Soviets.</i>
11-20	Conference of workers in shops and trading bodies on improvement and expansion of trade in the city.	<i>Permanent Commission for Trade, and City Trading Department.</i>
21-31	Conference of members of school-parents' committees on school family relations and spring examinations.	<i>E.C.s of Ward Soviets and City Education Department.</i>
April 1-10	Conference of workers in cultural and educational institutions on improved cultural services to the working people.	<i>Permanent Commission on Culture and Education.</i>
11-20	Conference of departments of chiefs of City and Ward E.C.s on progress in examining complaints and statements from the working people. Town's meetings in the workers' housing estates, factories and offices, on improvement of town's amenities.	Chairmen of permanent commissions, and the <i>E.C. of the City Soviet.</i> <i>E.C.s of Ward Soviets.</i>
21-30	Practical help for deputies of the City Soviet in making reports to their electors; preparation of data for deputies on progress in fulfilment of electors' instructions, and on the work of the City Soviet in January-March 1951.	<i>E.C. of the City Soviet, and E.C.s of Ward Soviets.</i>

Much of this plan was already in operation by the beginning of March.

—*Abridged from IZVESTIA, 3.3.51*

A PROGRESS REPORT

THREE months after the publication of the Syzran Plan it was being successfully fulfilled.

The town's meetings had been held. The first spring Sundays saw mass participation by the citizens in public works: they planted 18,000 trees and 35,000 bushes, laid out nearly 170,000 square feet of lawns and got all parks and squares ready for opening. Workers, employees, housewives and school-children of the Industrial Ward laid out a large new park. Many courtyards and streets were cleaned and decorated. Nearly the whole of the city's housing accommodation was taken over by the tenants for "Socialist upkeep". Conferences of street committees, sanitation representatives, medical workers and house managers, tenants' meetings and sessions of the Permanent Commission for Municipal Economy, preceded the beginning of the work in the Central Ward.

Buying foodstuffs and manufactured goods at the new shops in the Industrial and October Wards, seeing the new shops going up in the housing estates of the power-station workers, oil workers, railwaymen, miners, traction-engine workers, the citizens speak well of their city Soviet. A conference of active workers approved the scheme for the first tramway line.

Eleven stadiums and dozens of sports grounds are now functioning. At the beginning of June Syzran won the regional football cup. Students of the oil technical college have won a Union athletics championship.

Medical services are receiving much attention. A hydro is being opened shortly ; a new hospital in the oil workers' settlement is reaching completion, as is also the building of the miners' polyclinic ; the polyclinical division of the city hospital has been refitted.

After nearly a fortnight's investigation by teams of deputies and activists, a number of proposals were adopted for improving postal communications in the city outskirts, where there had been complaints of late deliveries. New post offices have been opened, more posting boxes put up, and postmen have begun to work better.

A detailed plan for the further expansion of the city's amenities has been worked out, in which voluntary activities by the citizens have made it possible greatly to exceed what the estimate provides for. In the Central Ward the workers of the flour mills and Combine Works have undertaken to help in repairing the road along the Volga Dam up to the floating bridge. Traction-engine workers will help in building the macadamised road beyond the station. The Batrak Factory asphalt workers will be working along three streets, railwaymen along another, and so on.

A report to employees of the E.C. of the City Soviet, by the E.C. chairman, on the question of improving the work of Soviet institutions on the City Development Plan for 1951, and on instructions from the electors, aroused hot discussion. The chiefs of the City Finance Department and Municipal Economy Department were sharply criticised for poor management. The effect of this criticism has been to improve the work of the departments of the E.C. The meeting was all the more successful because it was well prepared, by preliminary inspection on behalf of the E.C., some week or ten days beforehand, of the institutions coming up for discussion.

The deputies are just now reporting to their electors on their work and on progress in fulfilling the electors' instructions. Eighty-two instructions were given on questions of municipal economy and amenities, roads, water-supply, drainage, tramways, open spaces and lighting. Twenty-one of them have been completely carried out, thirty-four (involving new building in each case) will be completed in the next few months, and twenty-seven are to be included in the 1952 plan. There has been serious criticism at the meetings, levelled at the Ministry of Municipal Economy of the RSFSR and personally at the Minister, Comrade Proferansov, for delays in approving the technical drawings for the tramway and the Palace of Culture, without which credits for starting work cannot be obtained.

At the beginning of March, as planned, the E.C. heard a report from the City Trading Department and took a number of decisions based on instructions from the electors (more bookshops, more stores in the outskirts, and so on). But these decisions were not simply passed to the trading organisations. A consultation of active workers in trade was held, about four hundred taking part, to discuss how best to put the decisions into effect.

There is still plenty to do ; but the citizens of Syzran see how day by day things are improving.

—Abridged from IZVESTIA, 10.6.51

BOOK REVIEWS

B. H. SUMNER AND RUSSIAN HISTORY

PETER the Great is universally recognised as a central figure in Russian history, but a clear understanding of his role has rarely been attained by English historians.

This is for two reasons. First, there was considerable confusion among Russian historians in the nineteenth century about Peter's function. Some (the Slavophiles) saw him as attempting to smash the idyllic structure of seventeenth-century Muscovy, based—in their view—on peasant communes ruled over by a benevolent Tsar, and to replace it by an alien Western culture and economy. Others (the Westerners) correctly saw that Peter's struggle against medieval backwardness was part of the modernisation of the whole of Europe; but they did not appreciate the peculiar nature of his achievement—that he attempted to overcome Russia's feudal backwardness and bring her up to the level of Western Europe at the expense of the further *enservment* of the Russian peasantry.

Secondly, this confusion was worsened here because most British historians have been content to get their knowledge at second hand, without themselves studying original sources or the writings of even the leading Russian historians. (It is only through the backwardness of Russian studies in this country that such forgeries as "Peter the Great's will", exposed by Sumner, are still current.)

In view of this situation, and of Peter's outstanding importance, the publication of B. H. Sumner's last work* is an extremely welcome event, as is also the reissue of his earlier general history†. *Peter the Great and the Emergence of Russia* has the high standards of scholarship we have learned to expect from this author. Although Sumner himself was far from pro-Soviet, he made a thorough use of the works of Soviet historians (see his *Note on Books*, pages 210 and 211), and was clearly very much influenced by them.

Further, he has been at pains to emphasise that Peter's reforms were not a random stroke of genius or of evil, but were based on tendencies and elements already developing in seventeenth-century Muscovy

(Chapter 1), and he described Petrine policy in the context of Russian serf society as it then was.

This is not to say that the book has no limitations. Sumner had a bias towards diplomatic history at the expense of social and economic, and, although his knowledge was vast, his picture of Russian development at the time of Peter in this book is diffuse and not properly integrated; and while half the book is devoted to foreign policy, his description of social and economic changes takes up only twenty pages (Chapter 9) and is far from complete.

These weaknesses are shown even more clearly in his *Survey of Russian History*. (The sections of the *Survey* dealing with the Soviet period were critically reviewed by A. Rothstein in the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, No. 3 of Vol. V, 1944.) Sumner's analysis of many of the main problems of Russian history is unclear. The economic development of Kievan Rus is barely mentioned; the significance of the Tartar invasion in bringing about a short-term destruction and long-term stagnation of Russian town life is not clearly explained (page 91); the relation of the sixteenth-century *dvoryane* (small serving landowners) to serf labour, and the function of Ivan the Terrible's *oprichnina* in helping them by intensifying labour-rent, are not dealt with adequately (pages 81 and 101); Catherine the Great and Alexander I are somewhat idealised, and we are falsely led to believe that Catherine is interpreted positively by Soviet historians (page 67); the economic development of Russia in the decades before the 1917 Revolution is discussed without any mention of the all-important economic crisis of 1900-1903 and the consequent rise of syndicates in the principal branches of industry (pages 351-371). Then some institutions are inadequately or wrongly treated: the 16th-17th century *Zemsky Sobor* ("Assembly of the Land") is not seen as propping up the Tsar, supporting him against boyars and peasants (page 80); some statements on the boyars' *duma* (council of big landowners) are misleading (page 102); the peasant commune is idealised and discussed confusingly (pages 148-161); and the strange statement is made that the village soviets are "the old communes reborn as it were" (page 65). In the analysis of social thought in the nineteenth century Chernyshevsky and Plekhanov are not mentioned (pages 320-326)! There are some errors of detail: for

*PETER THE GREAT AND THE EMERGENCE OF RUSSIA. By B. H. Sumner. (*Teach Yourself History Series, English Universities Press, 5s.*)

†SURVEY OF RUSSIAN HISTORY. By B. H. Sumner. (*Reader's Library Series, Duckworth, 10s. 6d.* Reissue of 1947 second edition.)

example, July 1941 (page 197) should be June 1941: the 15th Conference of the CPSU (page 461) should read the 18th.

Much confusion arises from the curious structure of this work: events are not treated chronologically but by subjects: and within most of the subjects the author works backward from the Soviet period. Then there are some anomalies in its structure such as the inclusion of the "Soviet revolution in industry" in the chapter on "the West", whereas "the Land" has a chapter to itself.

Nevertheless, Sumner's *Survey* contains many valuable sections, notably on the 1861 serf reform (pages 140-142) and on peasant revolts (pages 161-170).

The author's untimely death will be deeply regretted by all who hope to see the development in this country of a serious study of Russia's past.

R. W. DAVIES.

Other works by B. H. Sumner: *RUSSIA AND THE BALKANS, 1870-1880* (Oxford University Press, 30s.); *TSARISM AND IMPERIALISM IN THE FAR EAST AND THE MIDDLE EAST, 1880-1914* (Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d.); *PETER THE GREAT AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE* (Basil Blackwell, 6s.). The latter is reviewed in *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Vol. XI, No. 2, Summer 1950.

FOLKLORE IN THE SOVIET UNION

THE Russian Translation Project of the American Council of Learned Societies has chosen wisely in adding to its series of scholarly Russian books a well-produced English (or perhaps we should say American) version of Academician Y. M. Sokolov's standard work on Russian folklore.* For indeed Yuri Sokolov and his scarcely less famous collaborating brother B. M. Sokolov (some of whose work has been incorporated into this volume) are, in their combination in folklore of enthusiasm and exact scholarship with pioneering effectiveness, very much like a twentieth-century counterpart of the German brothers Grimm. *Russian Folklore* was published shortly before the great war as a course to be used alike in places of higher education and by the educated general reader: and it has excellently served this purpose in Russia. Not only does it aim comprehensively at including everything relevant to its subject taken in the widest and fullest sense, but also at providing the necessary bibliographical aid to the scholar. It covers first the origin

and history of the study of its theme, then (naturally the great bulk of the work) Russian folklore before the October Revolution, and thirdly a much shorter account of post-revolutionary Russian folklore. A sketch of folklore in the Soviet nationalities is added, and there are indexes of authors cited and of folklore artistic performers (but unhappily no index of subjects).

It is a pity that so long has elapsed between the appearance of the original Russian book and this painstaking translation: for much has been happening in the USSR in the field of folklore, both in scholarship and in practice. Moreover, the book suffers from the apparent inability of its promoters to obtain the necessary advice for a needed revision from Soviet sources. For instance, a good deal of the theoretical part of the original work assumes the neo-Marr theories of language and closely links its views on folklore origins with the now discredited *New Doctrine of Marr about Language*. But a revised work which could have taken count of what may roughly be termed the Stalinist view of language and literature would have been far more useful in a translation which aims to present accurately the best that is now being thought on such matters in Russia today. In short, a good deal in this English version is now out of date as regards the theoretical portions, though the more fundamental and interesting parts, which treat of actual folklore in its history and practice, remain of first-rate importance.

Again, it is to be regretted that practically all the excellent Russian bibliographical material of the original—conveniently placed at the end of each chapter and in footnotes—is given only in English, so that the student who really tried to use this indispensable aid would have to guess from the translation at the Russian titles before he could do anything. One wonders of what use this bibliographic material is to those who cannot read Russian: yet those who can will also be unable to use it, in the absence of at least a transliterated Russian version of the items.

Yuri Sokolov's book is indeed a fine example of Soviet scholarship. It somehow manages to bring its vast subject into intimate and vital relation with the Russian people, while providing an always strictly scholarly basis and treatment. It has too (though the translator lacks the gifts to bring this out always effectively) considerable literary quality. The chapter, for instance, on the ballad-poetry technically known as *Byliny* is quite the best and most readable short account of its subject that the reviewer has seen: and it is pleasing to find that, even in a work which covers so vast a field in one volume, the Englishman Richard James, who first caused a few of these popular Russian

**RUSSIAN FOLKLORE*. By Academician Y. M. Sokolov. Translated by Catherine Ruth Smith. (Macmillan Co., New York, 1950, \$10 or £3 15s.)

poems to be copied in the early seventeenth century, receives due if brief treatment.

It is clearly not possible in this brief review to enter into any technical criticism of this really comprehensive volume. Inevitably the specialist in this or that field of folklore will think that something he considers important has been left out or too lightly handled. Proverbs alone, for example, have a vast literature of their own. But the British folklorist, who till now has only had as a quarry for his material for the study of the Russian proverb the section on proverbs in the Folklore Society's *Proverb Literature*,* will be grateful for the important added material which Professor Sokolov has provided (if he can guess the exact Russian titles from this translation or get access to the original). Again, some will think that too little has been made of Western work in folklore. But others will be amazed at how much has been included or touched upon in a volume which does not claim to do more than provide university courses for all parts of the field. Affinities with the Russian *Chastushki*, or popular short rhyming songs, might have been sought in the Old Norse *Visur*, and so on. But the truth is that the amount of accurate and yet widespread treatment of every conceivable aspect of folklore which has been got into one large volume is quite amazing. No folklorist—whatever his special interest—can fail to find something he has been looking for in this book.

As is to be expected in a work of Soviet scholarship, the study and practice of folklore and its living arts is made to appear vividly as an aspect of the great Russian renaissance in cultural life which is now taking place: and the enthusiasm for the future of his study and belief in its power to contribute vitally to the popular good which the author feels, is often communicated by his book. After stressing the great need for research workers in folklore ("research-personnel in folkloristics", as the translator has it), Academician Sokolov ends with what must indeed seem a well-justified claim that "a broad and honourable way of service to the people" has been opened to Soviet folklorists.

C. L. WRENN.

*PROVERB LITERATURE OR BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS RELATING TO PROVERBS, ed. Bonser. London (William Glazier Ltd., 1930). items 2920-3082.

THE SOVIET WAY WITH BACKWARD AREAS

ON any showing that pays attention to real facts, the thirty years of Soviet development in Central Asia make an amazing story, full of fascination for economist, industrialist, sociologist and ad-

ministrator alike. It is also a story that is likely to be seen by the men of the future, when they look back on it, as of cardinal importance to the course of world events in our time.

To begin with, we had better get our minds straight on the question of scale and significance. Today all tidings about the USSR are heard by the people of Britain in a stereotyped frame of reference which assumes that nothing good or even interesting can exist beyond the "iron curtain". Any Englishman who refuses to have his social perceptions distorted to fit this principle at once excommunicates himself from 95 per cent of his fellow countrymen. A detached observer might find it silly that so many of us should put out our own eyes and then reproach the Russians for our blindness, and might find it a point of psychological interest that we should choose so odd a form of self-mutilation. The facts of Soviet development, however, are not altered because we elect to misperceive them.

In this respect there has been great deterioration among the British people in recent years. Formerly, even hostile observers took it for granted that it was sensible to be interested in what was going on in the Soviet world. One of them, E. S. Bates, writing in 1940 on Soviet Asia, remarked that the quantity and quality of cotton produced in the Central Asian republics had improved between the two world wars to an extent "which renders these improvements one of the major facts in world industry during that period". And cotton is only one item in a long catalogue of similar improvements.

The *Economist*, which I quote as another consistently anti-Soviet witness, had the following comments to make in its issue of December 5, 1942, about the growth of industry and its consequences: "In the course of 1942 the centre of gravity of the USSR's economic life has shifted to Asia; and 1942 may rank in the USSR's history as the year of the great industrial ascendancy of its Asiatic republics. Asia is putting a new impress upon all sectors of Soviet life. In the army, soldiers of West Siberian and South Asiatic nationality have become most prominent. Tadiik and Uzbek detachments have been fighting in Stalingrad under the Siberian General Rodimtsev . . . Asia is rescuing Europe; and the influx of fresh blood has added new strength to the country in its struggle and suffering."

The tremendous tale hinted at in these two extracts is what W. P. and Zeld K. Coates are concerned to set out at length in their book.* Nobody in Britain or the USA, except the already converted, will believe a word they say: the fashionable

*SOVIETS IN CENTRAL ASIA. By W. P. and Zeld K. Coates. (Lawrence & Wishart, 25s.)

epidemic of anti-Soviet hysteria guarantees that degree of misplaced incredulity. One can but regret this, without however feeling that the appearance of the book is ill-timed. It is well to have in our hands a fuller record than has hitherto been available, and this one has all the merits we have learned to expect from the authors' earlier writings. Starting with a useful sketch of the history of the region from the time of Alexander the Great to the coming of the Bolsheviks, it proceeds to a detailed account of present-day conditions in each of the five Soviet republics there, dealing in turn with progress in agriculture, industry, cultural activities, public utilities, town-planning amenities, and so on.

The book seems to me to have three special virtues. It is an eye-witness account from recent visitors to the spot; the lively descriptions of things lately seen are rendered even more vivid by a series of admirable and well-chosen photographs; and it is written by politically educated people who are familiar with the implications of Soviet policy on nationalities, and who have a sympathetic understanding of the problems the Bolsheviks have been trying to solve.

In consequence we are given, and gratefully acknowledge, a clear general picture of a complex social situation as it stands today, as well as an approximate measure of progress already made and of the probable speed and direction of future development. The book comes convincingly to life and succeeds in bringing out much of the meaning of communism in action.

Where there is so much to be thankful for, it may seem churlish to wish that the authors had given us more of the "how" of Soviet achievement. One understands that, in a general way, such advances have been made possible by the broad economic development of the USSR, and that at the same time they in their turn have contributed vitally to that development. But in the mind of every reader who is interested in, shall we say, such matters as British colonial problems, there springs up a flow of more detailed queries relating to methods of procedure.

To take an illustration: in Kazakhstan in 1929 there were 576,000 children undergoing primary and secondary schooling; by 1949 the number had risen to 1,200,000, an increase of 624,000 (p. 134). If we assume a staff-pupil ratio of one in thirty, the teacher strength in service would have to be greater by 20,800 at the end of the period than at the beginning; and assuming again that a teacher's average length of service is twenty years, some 42,000 new teachers would have had to be trained and taken into service between the two dates, an average of over 2,000 a year. In a country with a total population of about six million, this would represent a fairly heavy demand on the upper fifth of the intelligence range (from which teachers

would presumably be drawn), especially at a time of rapid general expansion when similar demands on the same section of the population would be made by many non-educational enterprises. Moreover, the above figures relate only to the increase in teacher strength above the 1929 level; also to be taken into account are the replacements needed to maintain that level itself.

It would be of enormous interest to know by what processes of vocational guidance and selection this great body of teachers was got together. From what social elements was it drawn? What proportion was Kazakh by nationality? What sort of training were the recruits given, in what sort of institution, and under what instructors? What was the rate of wastage in training and in service? What qualifications were required for admission to training and what for graduation from it? What measure of dilution had to be applied to school staffs, and over how long a period? Did the schools work double shifts, and if so with different staffs or the same? In general, has the great increase in quantity been paid for in loss of quality? Or has it been possible to raise numbers and standards simultaneously? On the financial side, how was the cost apportioned between Republic Government and local Soviets? Was any part of the cost borne by collective farms or industrial concerns?

The African members of the new government in the Gold Coast, for example, would give much to know the detailed and practical administrative answers to such questions as these.

Mrs. Stahl* labours to compare the general principles of British colonial policy with the nationality policy followed in the Central Asian republics. She passes in review certain official documents that she happens to have read. Unfortunately, her thinking is uncritically dominated by the anti-Soviet stereotype to which I have referred, she has no clue to any of the purposes of Socialism, she fails to distinguish between a colony in the British sense and a nationality in the Soviet sense, she appears never to have set foot in any Soviet territory or to have had five minutes' frank conversation with either a communist or a colonial nationalist. These disabilities, in my opinion, make her work arid and fruitless.

What can one say of an author who speaks of the British Empire's "supreme attachment to the individual in upholding his rights against the executive government"? How strangely would that phrase ring in the ears of a Gandhi or a Nehru. It could never have been used by anyone who had looked at all closely into the state of the law relating to civil liberties in any of Britain's colonial territories.

LEONARD BARNES.

*BRITISH AND SOVIET COLONIAL SYSTEMS. By Kathleen Stahl. (Faber & Faber, 12s. 6d.)

LANGUAGES OF THE USSR

PROFESSOR MATTHEWS'S book* consists of 120 pages of text and 59 pages of tables, statistics, bibliography, and excellent indexes. The author has taken great trouble to collect a mass of detailed information, which he has presented in a painstaking digest. His familiarity with many little-known languages is astonishing.

The book abounds in interesting philological material, but it appeals chiefly to trained scholars. An ordinary reader will hardly find his way about such statements as the following: "syntactically Turkmen is remarkable for its intensive use of the quasi-ergative construction . . . in which the participle . . . is devoid of a morpheme to express the passive voice, and links up with the object by juxtaposition" (page 84).

The plan of the book is somewhat peculiar: languages seem to receive attention in the order of their philological quaintness. Pride of place is given to "palæo-Asiatic" languages (Nymylan, Kamchadal, etc.), on pages 3-13; the particularly careful chapter on the so-called "Uralian" languages (Samoyed, Chere-miss, Mordvin, Estonian, etc.) occupies pages 14-50; but the *lingua franca*, Russian, has been allowed five pages at the very end (pages 115-120). This impression of a certain unreality is increased by the basic diagram of the "Soviet language stocks" (page 2), in which the area of "Indo-European (Slavonic)" is squeezed in between a *larger* Altaic-cum-Caucasian area and a *half-as-large* "Uralian" area: it tapers out eastwards and stops on the threshold of the "palæo-Asiatic" edge; but in point of fact the 26,600 speakers of Luorovetlan, Nymylan, etc., are only a small minority in the Far East compared with the speakers of non-local languages.

The philological catalogue of the "Soviet" languages, dissociated from the general context of Soviet life, may give on the whole a wrong idea of the USSR as a congeries of unknown tribes and complicated languages. The author could not help recognising "the Soviet policy of consistently encouraging the literary use of regional idiom" (page 119), but on the following page he tries to take the soul out of this recognition by suggesting that "this policy is subtly expansionist in result, if not in purpose" (page 120).

At first, the point that in many languages the earlier "latinisation" has been replaced by the use of the Cyrillic (Russian) alphabet is explained by "the gradual recrudescence of Russian nationalism in the USSR" (page 71); a

few lines farther down, however, it is admitted that this change-over has led to "a more familiar and practical method of representing the spoken word". The term "Soviet languages" acquires at times some strange connotations. Until 1940 the author was, as explained in the "blurb", teaching at a Baltic university: this perhaps accounts for the nostalgic character of his remarks on the languages spoken on the Baltic seaboard.

He writes that "West Finnic" is represented in the USSR by two groups, "viz. one made up of the languages of recently annexed territories, and the other of languages with Soviet traditions" (page 33). The languages of the first group, namely Estonian and Livonian (the latter is spoken by only 2,000 people), "lack the Soviet historical and ideological background, and their evolution, like that of the Baltic group (Lithuanian, Latvian), pursued characteristic individual ways during two full decades of political independence (1918-1940)".

In this awkward formulation, philology has become manifestly affected by political idiosyncrasies. Twenty-two years of a most artificial situation in the Baltic countries can hardly stand in the way of a further evolution. In speaking of the relations between the Baltic countries and their hinterland, the author over-simplifies his task by dissociating the USSR from previous history, by keeping silence on the peculiar type of "independence" of these years 1918-1940, and by drawing no conclusions from the German *Drang Nach Osten* that is responsible for the suppression of at least two Baltic languages (pages 63 and 110).

Despite the book's curious undertones, the unprejudiced reader may well reflect on the survival of so many peoples and tribes within—or on the immediate periphery of—the Russian people. The example of the Mordvins, who live "interspersed with Russians" (page 29) and whose numbers have risen to nearly one and a half million (page 126), is particularly instructive. Here again, however, the author merely makes hints about the "grudgingly drawn boundaries of the Mordvin Autonomous Republic". Yet the contrast with the reservations in which under some other skies ancient tribes are finishing their days should provide ample food for thought.

V.M.

RUSSIAN TEXT OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

ONE must assume, since no guidance has been supplied by way of a preface, that this stressed text of Dostoevsky's *Crime*

*LANGUAGES OF THE USSR. By W. K. Matthews. (Cambridge University Press, 18s.)

and *Punishment** has been prepared by the Slavonic Department of Cambridge University to assist students of modern Russian in acquiring a correct standard pronunciation. If this is the case (and a text which intended to reproduce a *historical* pronunciation would surely have carried some indication to that effect) the book is an interesting example of the way in which Slavonic studies in British universities have tended to become ossified around the language as spoken at the turn of the century, taking little account of the changes in stress that have occurred in the living language. For many of the stresses that appear to be without any justification are in fact historical pronunciations that have now been superseded by the developing language.

An examination of a few pages taken at random also reveals a number of mistakes in stress that have no historical justification, and a number of misprints. Misprints are, of course, likely to occur in any stressed text, and although they detract considerably from the undoubted value of stressing for certain students one is usually sufficiently aware of their possible existence to read critically.

The book has been produced by the off-set litho process, using the edition of the YMCA Press, Paris, as its basis. One can only regret that so imperfect an example of the printer's art should have served as a basis for reproduction. The continual occurrence of type lines between the letters is a constant source of annoyance, and better plates could surely have been found.

In all it is difficult to understand why the Treasury should have seen fit to subsidise, and Dr. Elisabeth Hill and the Slavonic Department of Cambridge University to produce, the present work in its present form.

G.D.F.

*CRIME AND PUNISHMENT. By F. M. Dostoevsky. A Stressed Edition of the Russian Text. (Cambridge University Press, 12s. 6d.)

THEATREGOER IN MOSCOW, LENINGRAD AND KIEV

JOSEPH MACLEOD has written a very lively and entertaining collection of sketches* describing some two dozen visits to Soviet theatrical performances of various kinds. His scope includes ballet and puppet shows as well as "straight" theatre, deals with Soviet presentations of famous plays from abroad, a Mobile Theatre and the Gipsy Theatre, and even

*SOVIET THEATRE SKETCH BOOK. By Joseph Macleod. (Allen and Unwin, 15s.)

invades another field of art in order to tell us about the spectacular stereoscopic cinema.

The whole is presented very agreeably by means of various fictitious characters who go to shows together and argue amicably about them in the intervals and on the way home. Thus the writer finds *Pygmalion* at the Maly Theatre less like Shaw than Ostrovsky or Chekhov, as far as "inner truth" goes, and quite wrong as regards details of costume: his friends take him up on this and a stimulating argument follows.

Into this mainly theatrical reporting are interwoven many day-to-day details of Soviet life, and the reader gets to know some Soviet people and ways as a background to the main theme. The book is perhaps a little *too* chatty, and fails to give an impression of the vast and profound changes and developments that are daily going on in Soviet life and transforming Soviet people. Still, it is not intended as a profound sociological study, nor as a work for researchers or specialists, but simply as a pleasure to ordinary theatre-lovers; and all sincere theatre-lovers should read it. It is a pleasant work, and a vivaciously refreshing antidote to the dreary nonsense the poor "ordinary reader" is often treated to.

S.J.

A Soviet Theatre Sketch Book

By JOSEPH MACLEOD

Author of *The New Soviet Theatre*
and *Actors Cross the Volga*

The author uses the material gathered during his visit to Russia to show the effect of the productions upon different audiences. He gives, for the first time, an account of theatre audiences, theatres, theatre-schools, actors and actresses, and paints them into an all-over view of Russian and Ukrainian post-war life.

Joseph Macleod and his wife visited the Soviet Union as the guests of the Russian and Ukrainian Societies for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.

15/- net

ALLEN & UNWIN

40 Museum Street, London, W.C.1

BOOKS RECEIVED

COMMON SLAVIC ELEMENTS IN RUSSIAN CULTURE. By N. Trubetzkoy. (*Columbia University Press and Oxford University Press*, 6/6.)

CRISIS OF THE COLONIAL SYSTEM. (*People's Publishing House, Bombay*, 4 Rupees.)

FATHERS AND CHILDREN: HOUSE OF GENTLEFOLK: ON THE EVE: SMOKE: VIRGIN SOIL (2 vols.). By I. S. Turgenev. (*Heinemann*, 8/6 per volume.)

GUIDE TO THE SLAVONIC LANGUAGES. By R. G. A. de Bray (*J. M. Dent*, 70/-.)

100 SELECTED GAMES. By M. M. Botvinnik (*MacGibbon and Kee*, 18/-.)

INTRODUCTION TO WORLD POLITICS. By W. Friedmann (*Macmillan*, 10/6.)

REPORT ON RUSSIA. By Iqbal Singh (*Kutub Publishers, Bombay*, 3/8 Rupees.)

RUSSIAN PURGE. By F. Beck and W. Godin (*Hurst and Blackett*, 10/6.)

SOVIET DOCUMENTS ON FOREIGN POLICY. Vol. 1, 1917-1924. Ed. by J. Degas (*Oxford University Press*, 42/-.)

STALIN MEANS WAR. By G. A. Tokaev. (*Weidenfeld and Nicholson*, 12/6.)

THE GENESIS OF RUSSOPHOBIA IN GREAT BRITAIN. By J. H. Gleason. (*Harvard University Press and Oxford University Press*, 32/6.)

THE NEW SOCIETY. By E. H. Carr. (*Macmillan*, 7/6.)

THE SOVIET LINGUISTIC CONTROVERSY. Trans. by J. V. Murra, R. M. Hankin and F. Holling. (*King's Crown Press and Geoffrey Cumberlege*, \$2.00 or 12/6.)

PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

DECISIONS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU (B) ON LITERATURE AND ART. (*Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow*, 3d.)

GROMYKO (June 21): MALIK (June 23): PRAVDA EDITORIAL (June 24). (*Soviet News*, 1d.)

LIFE AND DESTINY. Poems by Otway McCannell. (*Published by the author*. Unpriced.)

RUSSIA—THE TRUTH. (*British Workers' Delegation*, 1/-.)

RUSSIA'S JETS AND OTHER AIRCRAFT. By W. Green and D. Wood. (*Smith and Hallam, of Sevenoaks, Kent*, 3/-.)

UKRAINE—EUROPE'S GREATEST PROBLEM. By L. Lawton. (*Panchuk's Ltd.*, 2/6.)

WE SAW SOCIALISM. By Charlotte and Dyson Carter (*Canadian-Soviet Friendship Society*, 50 cents.)

WHY NEED WE STUDY THE SLAVS? By E. Hill (*Cambridge University Press*, 2/-.)

JOURNALS RECEIVED

MASSES AND MAINSTREAM, June, July and August 1951. (*New Century*, NY, 35 cents each.)

MODERN QUARTERLY, Summer 1951 (Vol. 6, No. 3) and Autumn 1951 (Vol. 6, No. 4). (*Lawrence and Wishart*, 2/6 each.)

POLITICAL AFFAIRS, May, June, July and August 1951. (*New Century*, NY, 25 cents each.)

SOVIET STUDIES, July 1951 (Vol. 3, No. 1). (*Blackwell*, 9/-.)

THE SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN REVIEW, June 1951, Vol. 29, No. 73. (*School of Slavonic Studies*, 12/6.)

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SCR NOTES

DURING July and August, a scientific delegation organised by the SCR visited the Soviet Union from July 22 to August 11 at the invitation of VOKS. The members were *Dr. Horace Joules* (physician; Medical Superintendent of the Central Middlesex Hospital); *Dr. Ian Gilliland* (physician; Postgraduate Medical School, University of London); *Dr. Sidnie M. Manton, FRS* (Reader in Zoology, King's College, London); *Professor H. Levy* (mathematician; Imperial College of Science); *Dr. Alan Morton* (plant physiologist); and *Mr. Christopher Freeman* (lecturer in social sciences in the Extra-Mural Department of Glasgow University, and from October 1 organiser for the SCR).

The delegation visited Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad and Tashkent, and we hope to include in our next issue contributions from individual members. Meanwhile we quote from the statement (unanimously agreed, without prejudice of individual members on other matters) issued by the delegation to the press before leaving Moscow :

"During our stay of three weeks in the Soviet Union, our delegation, consisting of doctors, scientists, students and others, has travelled thousands of kilometres, by air, rail and road. Everywhere we have received the most generous hospitality from our hosts. Moreover, people quite unconnected with our delegation have greeted us with spontaneous pleasure.

"In choosing to visit Leningrad, Stalingrad and Tashkent from our base in Moscow, and in our requests to follow up innumerable individual interests with prominent members of Soviet medical, educational, scientific and cultural institutions, we set our hosts extremely complicated problems of organisation. Our wishes, however, have almost all been met, and we would emphasise that the main outline of our programme was decided by us before our arrival in the Soviet Union.

"What has struck us most in the course of our extensive travels has been the vast and unprecedented scope of the construction plans. We have seen and learned about the planned use of science and power on a scale which shows an entirely new approach to man's relations with nature and justifies the title "The Conquest of Nature." We have found the people well-informed about these projects and enthusiastically taking part in their fulfilment. Vast areas of desert territories will yield the means of life for millions of people within a few years.

"We are impressed by the fact that although planning is on such a scale, the greatest attention is also shown to the development of the individual and the care of his cultural needs. . . . Expansion of education is taking place at all levels. A great new university building is being completed in Moscow, as well as schools, *Palaces of Culture*, *Palaces of Technique*, and so on, in every part of the Soviet Union we have visited.

"We have seen something of the comprehensive care for the health of the people, with its emphasis on the prevention of disease and the universal provision of the necessary facilities for service in polyclinics and hospitals.

"Whatever may be our political and philosophical opinions, we were impressed by the provisions for cultural development, and the priority which these occupy in Soviet life. Drama, music, art and architecture are not divorced from the life of the people, who partake to the full in all these activities. All this is undoubtedly leading to a new and highly satisfying life. It represents a people's movement of an ethical and cultural nature. In this, the intense desire of the Soviet people for peace, as the necessary condition for human advance, shows itself on all sides.

"This was the deepest impression made upon the delegation. No matter where we went or to whom we spoke—ministers, Soviet Deputies, trade union

leaders, factory and farm workers, teachers and students, housewives and even children—all urged the need for peace to enable them to pursue their own way of life.

“We feel that this desire for peace is reflected in the practical construction policies of the Soviet Government, in whose support the people seem to us to be quite unanimous. The great construction and building schemes would appear to be directed solely to the advancement of the economic and cultural standards of the people and in no way do they seem to us to suggest preparations for aggression. . . .”

The delegation should have numbered seven, but readers will remember the unfortunate circumstances which prevented *Dr. E. H. S. Burhop* from accompanying it. The incident was all the more unfortunate from the point of view of Anglo-Soviet relations, because it occurred almost simultaneously with the Foreign Secretary's interview, published widely in the USSR, stressing the value of unrestricted international intercourse. The Society cannot but regret the nature of the advice which is tendered to Ministers when it leads, not to an improvement in Anglo-Soviet relations, but to the kind of situation described by Dr. Burhop in a letter published in *THE TIMES* of August 29 :

Sir.—Now that the episode of the cancellation of my passport has been terminated by the issuing of a new passport, may I be permitted the courtesy of your columns to make a few observations and to correct certain misconceptions? Whatever one may feel about the merits of a policy of restricting the travel rights of “atomic scientists who have at any time had access to classified information”, it can hardly be denied that its implementation in my case was extraordinarily maladroit. My passport is being reissued on my giving an assurance that I shall consult with the Foreign Office before proceeding to the USSR or other countries regarded as within the Soviet sphere. Such an assurance would at all times have been available from me. Had it at any time been intimated that, on account of my war-time experience in atomic energy research, it was considered undesirable that I should visit the Soviet Union with the good-will mission, I would have been perfectly willing to discuss the matter with the Foreign Office. If they had persisted in their opposition to my visit I would have been guided by their advice regardless of my personal conviction about the desirability of the visit.

Such an opportunity of consultation was never afforded me. Instead I was curtly informed by letter that my passport had been cancelled and the matter was allowed to reach the Press in a way that led to the most damaging reflections about my loyalty and integrity. The same ineptness and lack of courtesy characterised the announcement to the Press of the reissue of my passport. The form of the statement to be issued was still the subject of correspondence between my solicitors and the Foreign Office. In spite of this the Foreign Office informed me by telephone about mid-day on Saturday that a statement had already been issued because, in some unaccountable way, the news had “leaked” to a Sunday newspaper. Such a procedure gave scant recognition to the dignified and cooperative way in which my solicitors had sought to conduct the negotiations on my behalf.

I understand I am the first British scientist who worked on the war-time atomic project who has sought to pay a visit to the USSR. Perhaps, therefore, the defects in the method of handling my case can be understood, although not justified. But the position of “ex-project” scientists in general needs some careful consideration. Take my own case. It is six years since I had access to any classified information, and practically all the work with which I was associated on the atomic energy project has been published in the United States. It forms, in fact, the greater part of volume V of the National Nuclear Energy Series published under the title *Characteristics of Electric Discharges in Magnetic Fields* (1949, McGraw Hill). In a subject developing as rapidly as atomic energy and its applications, my own perspective, based on the 1945 position, must inevitably be out of date. For how much longer then must I be considered to possess information of such a character as to justify a restriction of my rights of travel?

I suggest that there should be set up, without delay, a small committee of atomic scientists, enjoying the confidence of their fellows, and charged with the responsibility of examining the whole position of “ex-project” scientists, and of enunciating certain principles whereby it can be decided when such scientists can be released from the special category in which they are apparently now placed with regard to travel rights.

Yours faithfully,

E. H. S. BURHOP.

SCR DUPLICATED DOCUMENTS

RECENT ADDITIONS

(The prices in brackets are those for SCR members)

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- Ch. 32-35. **The World Chess Championship**. Full scores of the twenty-four games between Botvinnik and Bronstein, edited by William Winter ... 4/- set
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May we remind our readers that on Thursday, November 22, Professor Gordon Childe is lecturing on SOVIET ARCHAEOLOGY, at the SCR, 14 Kensington Square, London, W.8

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